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XL 48.51 [Ess]

C. Cannan
24 Dec 1879

Cannan Donation, 1920,
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To be returned

23 OCT 1951

2 DEC 1954

ESSAYS

AND

TREATISES

ON

SEVERAL SUBJECTS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

By DAVID HUME, Esq;

VOL. I.

CONTAINING

ESSAYS, MORAL, POLITICAL, and LITERARY.

A NEW EDITION.

LONDON:
Printed for A. MILLAR, in the Strand;
AND
A. KINCAID and A. DONALDSON, at Edinburgh.
MDCCLXIV.

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ESSAYS,

MORAL, POLITICAL,

AND

LITERARY.

PART I.*

* PUBLISHED 1742.

ESSAY I.

Of the DELICACY of TASTE and PASSION.

SOME People are ſubject to a certain *delicacy* of *paſſion*, which makes them extremely ſenſible to all the accidents of life, and gives them a lively joy upon every proſperous event, as well as a piercing grief, when they meet with misfortunes and adverſity. Favours and good offices eaſily engage their friendſhip; while the ſmalleſt injury provokes their reſentment. Any honour or mark of diſtinction elevates them above meaſure; but they are as ſenſibly touched with contempt. People of this character have, no doubt, much more lively enjoyments, as well as more pungent ſorrows, than men of cool and ſedate tempers: But, I believe, when every thing is balanced, there is no one, who would not rather chuſe to be of the latter character, were he entirely maſter of his own diſpoſition. Good or ill fortune is very little at our own diſpoſal: And when a perſon, that has this ſenſibility of temper, meets with any misfortune, his ſorrow or reſentment takes intire poſſeſſion of him, and deprives him of all reliſh in the common occurrences of life; the right enjoyment of which forms the greateſt part of our happineſs. Great pleaſures are much leſs frequent than great pains; ſo that a ſenſible temper muſt meet with fewer trials in the former way than in the latter. Not to mention, that men of ſuch lively paſſions are apt to be tranſported beyond all bounds

of prudence and diſcretion, and to take falſe ſteps in the conduct of life, which are often irretrievable.

There is a *delicacy* of *taſte* obſervable in ſome men, which very much reſembles this *delicacy* of *paſſion*, and produces the ſame ſenſibility to beauty and deformity of every kind, as that does to proſperity and adverſity, obligations and injuries. When you preſent a poem or a picture to a man poſſeſſed of this talent, the delicacy of his feeling, makes him be touched very ſenſibly with every part of it; nor are the maſterly ſtrokes perceived with more exquiſite reliſh and ſatisfaction, than the negligences or abſurdities with diſguſt and uneaſineſs. A polite and judicious converſation affords him the higheſt entertainment; rudeneſs or impertinence is as great a puniſhment to him. In ſhort, delicacy of taſte has the ſame effect as delicacy of paſſion: It enlarges the ſphere both of our happineſs and miſery, and makes us ſenſible to pains as well as pleaſures, which eſcape the reſt of mankind.

I believe, however, there is no one, who will not agree with me, that notwithſtanding this reſemblance, a delicacy of taſte is as much to be deſired and cultivated as a delicacy of paſſion is to be lamented, and to be remedied, if poſſible. The good or ill accidents of life are very little at our diſpoſal; but we are pretty much maſters what books we ſhall read, what diverſions we ſhall partake of, and what company we ſhall keep. Philoſophers have endeavoured to render happineſs entirely independent of every thing external. That is impoſſible to be *attained:* But every wiſe man will endeavour to place his happineſs on ſuch objects as depend moſt upon himſelf: and *that* is not to be *attained* ſo much by any other means as by this delicacy of ſentiment. When a man is poſſeſſed of that talent, he is more happy by what pleaſes his taſte, than by what gratifies his appetites,

tites, and receives more enjoyment from a poem or a piece of reaſoning than the moſt expenſive luxury can afford.

How far delicacy of taſte, and that of paſſion, are connected together in the original frame of the mind, it is hard to determine. To me there appears a very conſiderable connexion between them. For we may obſerve that women, who have more delicate paſſions than men, have alſo a more delicate taſte of the ornaments of life, of dreſs, equipage, and the ordinary decencies of behaviour. Any excellency in theſe hits their taſte much ſooner than ours; and when you pleaſe their taſte, you ſoon engage their affections.

But whatever connexion there may be originally betwixt theſe diſpoſitions, I am perſuaded, that nothing is ſo proper to cure us of this delicacy of paſſion, as the cultivating of that higher and more refined taſte, which enables us to judge of the characters of men, of compoſitions of genius, and of the productions of the nobler arts. A greater or leſs reliſh of thoſe obvious beauties which ſtrike the ſenſes, depends entirely upon the greater or leſs ſenſibility of the temper: But with regard to the ſciences and liberal arts, a fine taſte is, in ſome meaſure, the ſame with ſtrong ſenſe, or at leaſt depends ſo much upon it, that they are inſeparable. To judge aright of a compoſition of genius, there are ſo many views to be taken in, ſo many circumſtances to be compared, and ſuch a knowledge of human nature requiſite, that no man, who is not poſſeſſed of the ſoundeſt judgment, will ever make a tolerable critic in ſuch performances. And this is a new reaſon for cultivating a reliſh in the liberal arts. Our judgment will ſtrengthen by this exerciſe: We ſhall form juſter notions of life: Many things, which pleaſe or afflict others, will appear to us too frivolous to engage our attention: And we ſhall loſe by degrees that ſenſibility and delicacy of paſſion, which is ſo incommodious.

But perhaps I have gone too far in ſaying, That a cultivated taſte for the polite arts extinguiſhes the paſſions, and renders us indifferent to thoſe objects which are ſo fondly purſued by the reſt of mankind. On farther reflection, I find, that it rather improves our ſenſibility for all the tender and agreeable paſſions; at the ſame time that it renders the mind incapable of the rougher and more boiſterous emotions.

Ingenuas didiciſſe fideliter artes,
Emollit mores, nec ſinit eſſe feros.

For this, I think there may be aſſigned two very natural reaſons. In the *firſt* place, nothing is ſo improving to the temper as the ſtudy of the beauties, either of poetry, eloquence, muſick, or painting. They give a certain elegance of ſentiment, to which the reſt of mankind are entire ſtrangers. The emotions they excite are ſoft and tender. They draw the mind off from the hurry of buſineſs and intereſt; cheriſh reflection; diſpoſe to tranquillity; and produce an agreeable melancholy, which, of all diſpoſitions of the mind, is the beſt ſuited to love and friendſhip.

In the *ſecond* place, a delicacy of taſte is favourable to love and friendſhip, by confining our choice to few people, and making us indifferent to the company and converſation of the greateſt part of men. You will very ſeldom find, that mere men of the world, whatever ſtrong ſenſe they may be endowed with, are very nice in diſtinguiſhing of characters, or in marking thoſe inſenſible differences and gradations which make one man preferable to another. Any one, that has competent ſenſe, is ſufficient for their entertainment: They talk to him, of their pleaſure and affairs, with the ſame frankneſs as they would to another; and finding many, who are fit to ſupply his place, they never feel any vacancy or want

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in his abſence. But to make uſe of the alluſion of a celebrated * FRENCH author, the judgment may be compared to a clock or watch, where the moſt ordinary machine is ſufficient to tell the hours; but the moſt elaborate and artificial alone can point out the minutes and ſeconds, and diſtinguiſh the ſmalleſt differences of time. One that has well digeſted his knowlege both of books and men, has little enjoyment but in the company of a few ſelect companions. He feels too ſenſibly, how much all the reſt of mankind fall ſhort of the notions which he has entertained. And, his affections being thus confined within a narrow circle, no wonder he carries them further than if they were more general and undiſtinguiſhed. The gaiety and frolic of a bottle companion improves with him into a ſolid friendſhip: And the ardours of a youthful appetite become an elegant paſſion.

* *Monſ.* FONTENELLE, *Pluralité des Mondes.* Soir 6.

ESSAY II.

Of the LIBERTY of the PRESS.

NOTHING is more apt to ſurprize a foreigner, than the extreme liberty, which we enjoy in this country, of communicating whatever we pleaſe to the public, and of openly cenſuring every meaſure, entered into by the king or his miniſters. If the adminiſtration reſolve upon war, it is affirmed, that either wilfully or ignorantly they miſtake the intereſt of the nation, and that peace, in the preſent ſituation of affairs, is infinitely preferable. If the paſſion of the miniſters lie towards peace, our political writers breathe nothing but war and devaſtation, and repreſent the pacific conduct of the government as mean and puſillanimous. As this liberty is not indulged in any other government, either republican or monarchical; in HOLLAND and VENICE, no more than in FRANCE or SPAIN; it may very naturally give occaſion to theſe two queſtions, *How it happens that* GREAT BRITAIN *enjoys ſuch a peculiar privilege?* and *Whether the unlimited exerciſe of this liberty be advantageous or prejudicial to the public?*

As to the firſt queſtion, Why the laws indulge us in ſuch an extraordinary liberty? I believe the reaſon may be derived from our mixed form of government, which is neither wholly monarchical, nor wholly republican. It will be found, if I miſtake not, a true obſervation in politics, that the two extremes in government, liberty and

and ſlavery, commonly approach neareſt to each other; and that as you depart from the extremes, and mix a little of monarchy with liberty, the government becomes always the more free; and on the other hand, when you mix a little of liberty with monarchy, the yoke becomes always the more grievous and intolerable. I ſhall endeavour to explain myſelf. In a government, ſuch as that of FRANCE, which is entirely abſolute, and where laws, cuſtom, and religion concur, all of them, to make the people fully ſatisfied with their condition, the monarch cannot entertain the leaſt *jealouſy* againſt his ſubjects, and therefore is apt to indulge them in great *liberties* both of ſpeech and action. In a government altogether republican, ſuch as that of HOLLAND, where there is no magiſtrate ſo eminent as to give *jealouſy* to the ſtate, there is no danger in intruſting the magiſtrates with very large diſcretionary powers; and though many advantages reſult from ſuch powers, in the preſerving peace and order, yet they lay a conſiderable reſtraint on men's actions, and make every private ſubject pay a great reſpect to the government. Thus it ſeems evident, that the two extremes of abſolute monarchy and of a republic, approach very near to each other in ſome material circumſtances. In the *firſt*, the magiſtrate has no jealouſy of the people: In the *ſecond*, the people have no jealouſy of the magiſtrate: Which want of jealouſy begets a mutual confidence and truſt in both caſes, and produces a ſpecies of liberty in monarchies, and of arbitrary power in republics.

To juſtify the other part of the foregoing obſervation, that in every government the means are moſt wide of each other, and that the mixtures of monarchy and liberty render the yoke either more eaſy or more grievous; I muſt take notice of a remark of TACITUS with regard to the ROMANS under the emperors, that they nei-

ther could bear total ſlavery nor total liberty, *Nec totam ſervitutem, nec totam libertatem pati poſſunt.* This remark a celebrated poet has tranſlated and applied to the ENGLISH, in his lively deſcription of queen ELIZABETH's policy and government.

Et ſit aimer ſon joug a l'Anglois indompté,
Qui ne peut ni ſervir, ni vivre en liberté.

HENRIADE, *Liv.* I.

According to theſe remarks, we are to conſider the ROMAN government under the emperors as a mixture of deſpotiſm and liberty, where the deſpotiſm prevailed; and the ENGLISH government as a mixture of the ſame kind, but where the liberty predominates. The conſequences are exactly conformable to the foregoing obſervation; and ſuch as may be expected from thoſe mixed forms of government, which beget a mutual watchfulneſs and jealouſy. The ROMAN emperors were, many of them, the moſt frightful tyrants that ever diſgraced human nature; and it is evident that their cruelty was chiefly excited by their *jealouſy*, and by their obſerving that all the great men of ROME bore with impatience the dominion of a family, which, but a little before, was no wiſe ſuperior to their own. On the other hand, as the republican part of the government prevails in ENGLAND, though with a great mixture of monarchy, 'tis obliged, for its own preſervation, to maintain a watchful *jealouſy* over the magiſtrates, to remove all diſcretionary powers, and to ſecure every one's life and fortune by general and inflexible laws. No action muſt be deemed a crime but what the law has plainly determined to be ſuch: No crime muſt be imputed to a man but from a legal proof before his judges; and even theſe judges muſt be his fellow-ſubjects, who are obliged, by their own intereſt, to have a watchful eye over the encroach-

croachments and violence of the miniſters. From theſe cauſes it proceeds, that there is as much liberty, and even, perhaps, licentiouſneſs in BRITAIN, as there were formerly ſlavery and tyranny in ROME.

Theſe principles account for the great liberty of the preſs in theſe kingdoms, beyond what is indulged in any other government. 'Tis ſufficiently known, that arbitrary power would ſteal in upon us, were we not extremely watchful to prevent its progreſs, and were there not an eaſy method of conveying the alarum from one end of the kingdom to the other. The ſpirit of the people muſt frequently he rouzed in order to curb the ambition of the court; and the dread of rouſing this ſpirit, muſt be employed to prevent that ambition. Nothing ſo effectual to this purpoſe as the liberty of the preſs, by which all the learning, wit and genius of the nation may be employed on the ſide of freedom, and every one be animated to its defence. As long, therefore, as the republican part of our government can maintain itſelf againſt the monarchical, it muſt be extremely careful of preſerving the preſs open, as of the utmoſt importance to its own preſervation.

Since therefore that liberty is ſo eſſential to the ſupport of our mixed government; this ſufficiently decides the ſecond queſtion, *Whether ſuch a liberty be advantageous or prejudicial*; there being nothing of greater importance in every ſtate than the preſervation of the ancient government, eſpecially if it be a free one. But I would fain go a ſtep farther, and aſſert, that this liberty is attended with ſo few inconveniencies, that it may be claimed as the common right of mankind, and ought to be indulged them almoſt in every government: except the eccleſiaſtical, to which indeed it would prove fatal. We need not dread from this liberty any ſuch ill conſequences as followed from the harangues of the popular demagogues of ATHENS and tribunes of ROME. A man reads a book

or

or pamphlet alone and coolly. There is none present from whom he can catch the passion by contagion. He is not hurried away by the force and energy of action. And should he be wrought up to ever so seditious a humour, there is no violent resolution presented to him, by which he can immediately vent his passion. The liberty of the press, therefore, however abused, can scarce ever excite popular tumults or rebellion. And as to those murmurs or secret discontents it may occasion, 'tis better they should get vent in words, that they may come to the knowledge of the magistrate before it be too late, in order to his providing a remedy against them. Mankind, it is true, have always a greater propension to believe what is said to the disadvantage of their governors, than the contrary; but this inclination is inseparable from them, whether they have liberty or not. A whisper may fly as quick, and be as pernicious as a pamphlet. Nay, it will be more pernicious, where men are not accustomed to think freely, or distinguish between truth and falshood.

It has also been found, as the experience of mankind increases, that the *people* are no such dangerous monster as they have been represented, and that it is in every respect better to guide them, like rational creatures, than to lead or drive them, like brute beasts. Before the United Provinces set the example, toleration was deemed incompatible with good government; and it was thought impossible, that a number of religious sects could live together in harmony and peace, and have all of them an equal affection to their common country, and to each other. ENGLAND has set a like example of civil liberty; and though this liberty seems to occasion some small ferment at present, it has not as yet produced any pernicious effects; and it is to be hoped, that men, being every day more accustomed to the free discussion of public affairs, will improve in the judgment of them, and be with greater difficulty seduced by every idle rumour and popular clamour.

It is a very comfortable reflection to the lovers of liberty, that this peculiar privilege of BRITAIN is of a kind that cannot eaſily be wreſted from us, but muſt laſt as long as our government remains, in any degree, free and independent. It is ſeldom, that liberty of any kind is loſt all at once. Slavery has ſo frightful an aſpect to men accuſtomed to freedom, that it muſt ſteal upon them by degrees, and muſt diſguiſe itſelf in a thouſand ſhapes, in order to be received. But, if the liberty of the preſs ever be loſt, it muſt be loſt at once. The general laws againſt ſedition and libelling are at preſent as ſtrong as they poſſibly can be made. Nothing can impoſe a farther reſtraint, but either the clapping an IMPRIMATUR upon the preſs, or the giving to the court very large diſcretionary powers to puniſh whatever diſpleaſes them. But theſe conceſſions would be ſuch a bare-faced violation of liberty, that they will probably be the laſt efforts of a deſpotic government. We may conclude, that the liberty of *Britain* is gone for ever when theſe attempts ſhall ſucceed.

ESSAY

ESSAY III.

That POLITICS may be reduced to a SCIENCE.

IT is a queſtion with ſeveral, Whether there be any eſſential difference between one form of government and another? and, whether every form may not become good or bad, according as it is well or ill adminiſtred *? Were it once admitted, that all governments are alike, and that the only difference conſiſts in the character and conduct of the governors, moſt political diſputes would be at an end, and all *Zeal* for one conſtitution above another, muſt be eſteemed mere bigotry and folly. But, though a friend to Moderation, I cannot forbear condemning this ſentiment, and ſhould be ſorry to think, that human affairs admit of no greater ſtability, than what they receive from the caſual humours and characters of particular men.

'Tis true, thoſe who maintain, that the goodneſs of all government conſiſts in the goodneſs of the adminiſtration, may cite many particular inſtances in hiſtory, where the very ſame government, in different hands, has varied ſuddenly into the two oppoſite extremes of good and bad. Compare the FRENCH government under HENRY III. and under HENRY IV. Oppreſſion, levity, artifice on the part of the rulers; faction, ſedition, treachery,

* *For forms of government let fools conteſt*
Whate'er is beſt adminiſter'd is beſt.

ESSAY on Man, Book 3.

rebellion,

rebellion, diſloyalty on the part of the ſubjects: Theſe compoſe the character of the former miſerable æra. But when the patriot and heroic prince, who ſucceeded, was once firmly ſeated on the throne, the government, the people, every thing ſeemed to be totally changed; and all from the difference of the temper and ſentiments of theſe two ſovereigns. An equal difference of a contrary kind, may be found on comparing the reigns of ELIZABETH and JAMES, at leaſt with regard to foreign affairs: and inſtances of this kind may be multiplied, almoſt without number, from ancient as well as modern hiſtory.

But here I would beg leave to make a diſtinction. All abſolute governments (and ſuch, in a great meaſure, was that of ENGLAND, till the middle of the laſt century, notwithſtanding the numerous panegyrics on ancient ENGLISH liberty) muſt very much depend on the adminiſtration; and this is one of the great inconveniencies of that form of government. But a republican and free government would be a moſt obvious abſurdity, if the particular checks and controuls, provided by the conſtitution, had really no influence, and made it not the intereſt, even of bad men, to operate for the public good. Such is the intention of theſe forms of government, and ſuch is their real effect, where they are wiſely conſtituted: As, on the other hand, they are the ſources of all diſorder, and of the blackeſt crimes, where either ſkill or honeſty has been wanting in their original frame and inſtitution.

So great is the force of laws, and of particular forms of government, and ſo little dependence have they on the humours and tempers of men, that conſequences almoſt as general and certain may be deduced from them, on moſt occaſions, as any which the mathematical ſciences afford us.

The ROMAN government gave the whole legiſlative power to the commons, without allowing a negative either to the nobility or conſuls. This unbounded power the commons poſſeſſed in a collective, not in a repreſentative body. The conſequences were: When the people, by ſucceſs and conqueſt, had become very numerous, and had ſpread themſelves to a great diſtance from the capital, the city-tribes, tho' the moſt contemptible, carried almoſt every vote: They were, therefore, moſt cajoled by every one who affected popularity: They were ſupported in idleneſs by the general diſtribution of corn, and by particular bribes, which they received from almoſt every candidate: By this means they became every day more licentious, and the CAMPUS MARTIUS was a perpetual ſcene of tumult and ſedition: Armed ſlaves were introduced among theſe raſcally citizens; ſo that the whole government fell into anarchy, and the greateſt happineſs which the ROMANS could look for, was the deſpotic power of the CÆSARS. Such are the effects of democracy without a repreſentative.

A Nobility may poſſeſs the whole, or any part of the legiſlative power of a ſtate, in two different ways. Either every nobleman ſhares the power as part of the whole body, or the whole body enjoys the power as compoſed of parts, which have each a diſtinct power and authority. The VENETIAN ariſtocracy is an inſtance of the firſt kind of government: The POLISH of the ſecond. In the VENETIAN government the whole body of nobility poſſeſſes the whole power, and no nobleman has any authority which he receives not from the whole. In the POLISH government every nobleman, by means of his fiefs, has a peculiar hereditary authority over his vaſſals, and the whole body has no authority but what it receives from the concurrence of its parts. The diſtinct operations and tendencies of theſe two ſpecies of government might be made moſt apparent even *a priori*.

A VENETIAN nobility is infinitely preferable to a POLISH, let the humours and education of men be ever ſo much varied. A nobility, who poſſeſs their power in common, will preſerve peace and order, both among themſelves, and their ſubjects; and no member can have authority enough to controul the laws for a moment. The nobles will preſerve their authority over the people, but without any grievous tyranny, or any breach of private property; becauſe ſuch a tyrannical government promotes not the intereſt of the whole body, however it may that of ſome individuals. There will be a diſtinction of rank between the nobility and people, but this will be the only diſtinction in the ſtate. The whole nobility will form one body, and the whole people another, without any of thoſe private feuds and animoſities, which ſpread ruin and deſolation every where. 'Tis eaſy to ſee the diſadvantages of a POLISH nobility in every one of theſe particulars.

'Tis poſſible ſo to conſtitute a free government, as that a ſingle perſon, call him doge, prince, or king, ſhall poſſeſs a very large ſhare of power, and ſhall form a proper balance or counterpoiſe to the other parts of the legiſlature. This chief magiſtrate may be either *elective* or *hereditary*; and though the former inſtitution may, to a ſuperficial view, appear the moſt advantageous; yet a more accurate inſpection will diſcover in it greater inconveniencies than in the latter, and ſuch as are founded on cauſes and principles eternal and immutable. The filling of the throne, in ſuch a government, is a point of too great and too general intereſt, not to divide the whole people into factions: From whence a civil war, the greateſt of ills, may be apprehended, almoſt with certainty, upon every vacancy. The prince elected muſt be either a *Foreigner* or a *Native*: The former will be ignorant of the people whom he is to govern; ſuſpicious of his new ſubjects, and ſuſpected by them; giving his con-

confidence entirely to ſtrangers, who will have no other care but of enriching themſelves in the quickeſt manner, while their maſter's favour and authority are able to ſupport them. A native will carry into the throne all his private animoſities and friendſhips, and will never be regarded, in his elevation, without exciting the ſentiments of envy in thoſe, who formerly conſidered him as their equal. Not to mention, that a crown is too high a reward ever to be given to merit alone, and will always induce the candidates to employ force, or money, or intrigue, to procure the votes of the electors: So that ſuch an election will give no better chance for ſuperior merit in the prince, than if the ſtate had truſted to birth alone for determining their ſovereign.

It may therefore be pronounced as an univerſal axiom in politics, *That an hereditary prince, a nobility without vaſſals, and a people voting by their repreſentatives, form the beſt* MONARCHY, ARISTOCRACY, *and* DEMOCRACY. But in order to prove more fully, that politics admit of general truths, which are invariable by the humor or education either of ſubject or ſovereign, it may not be amiſs to obſerve ſome other principles of this ſcience, which may ſeem to deſerve that character.

It may eaſily be obſerved, that though free governments have been commonly the moſt happy for thoſe who partake of their freedom; yet are they the moſt ruinous and oppreſſive to their provinces: And this obſervation may, I believe, be fixed as a maxim of the kind we are here ſpeaking of. When a monarch extends his dominions by conqueſt, he ſoon learns to conſider his old and his new ſubjects as on the ſame footing; becauſe, in reality, all his ſubjects are to him the ſame, except the few friends and favourites, with whom he is perſonally acquainted. He does not, therefore, make any diſtinction between them in his *general* laws; and, at the ſame

time, is no leſs careful to prevent all *particular* acts of oppreſſion on the one as on the other. But a free ſtate neceſſarily makes a great diſtinction and muſt always do ſo, till men learn to love their neighbours as well as themſelves. The conquerors, in ſuch a government, are all legiſlators, and will be ſure ſo to contrive matters, by reſtrictions of trade, and by taxes, as to draw ſome private, as well as public, advantage from their conqueſts. Provincial governors have alſo a better chance in a republic, to eſcape with their plunder, by means of bribery or intereſt; and their fellow-citizens, who find their own ſtate to be inriched by the ſpoils of the ſubject-provinces, will be the more inclined to tolerate ſuch abuſes. Not to mention, that it is a neceſſary precaution in a free ſtate to change the governors frequently; which obliges theſe temporary tyrants to be more expeditious and rapacious, that they may accumulate ſufficient wealth before they give place to their ſucceſſors. What cruel tyrants were the ROMANS over the world during the time of their commonwealth! 'Tis true, they had laws to prevent oppreſſion in their provincial magiſtrates; but CICERO informs us, that the ROMANS could not better conſult the intereſt of the provinces than by repealing theſe very laws. For, in that caſe, ſays he, our magiſtrates, having intire impunity, would plunder no more than would ſatisfy their own rapaciouſneſs; whereas, at preſent, they muſt alſo ſatisfy that of their judges, and of all the great men of ROME, whoſe protection they ſtand in need of. Who can read of the cruelties and oppreſſions of VERRES without horror and aſtoniſhment? And who is not touched with indignation to hear, that after CICERO had exhauſted on that abandoned criminal all the thunders of his eloquence, and had prevailed ſo far as to get him condemned to the utmoſt extent of the laws; yet that cruel tyrant lived peaceably to old age, in opulence and eaſe, and, thirty years after-

afterward, was put into the proſcription by MARK ANTHONY, on account of his exorbitant wealth, where he fell, with CICERO himſelf, and all the moſt virtuous men of ROME? After the diſſolution of the commonwealth, the ROMAN yoke became eaſier upon the provinces, as TACITUS informs us *; and it may be obſerved, that many of the worſt emperors, DOMITIAN †, for inſtance, were very careful to prevent all oppreſſion of the provinces. In ‡ TIBERIUS's time, GAUL was eſteemed richer than ITALY itſelf: Nor, do I find, during the whole time of the ROMAN monarchy, that the empire became leſs rich or populous in any of its provinces; though indeed its valour and military diſcipline were always upon the decline. The oppreſſion and tyranny of the CARTHAGINIANS over their ſubject ſtates in AFRICA went ſo far, as we learn from POLYBIUS ‖, that not content with exacting the half of all the produce of the ground, which of itſelf was a very high rent, they alſo loaded them with many other taxes. If we paſs from antient to modern times, we ſhall always find the obſervation to hold. The provinces of abſolute monarchies are always better treated than thoſe of free ſtates. Compare the *Païs conquis* of FRANCE with IRELAND, and you will be convinced of this truth; though this latter kingdom being, in a good meaſure, peopled from ENGLAND, poſſeſſes ſo many rights and privileges as ſhould naturally make it challenge better treatment than that of a conquered province. CORSICA is alſo an obvious inſtance to the ſame purpoſe.

* Ann. lib. 1. cap. 2.

† SUET. in vita DOMIT.

‡ *Egregium reſumendæ libertati tempus, ſi ipſi florentes, quam inops* ITALIA, *quam imbellis urbana plebs, nihil validum in exercitibus, niſi quod externum cogitarent.* TACIT. Ann. lib. 3.

‖ Lib. 1. cap. 72.

There is an obſervation of MACHIAVEL, with regard to the conqueſts of ALEXANDER the Great, which, I think, may be regarded as one of thoſe eternal political truths which no time nor accidents can vary. It may ſeem ſtrange, ſays that politician, that ſuch ſudden conqueſts, as thoſe of ALEXANDER, ſhould be poſſeſſed ſo peaceably by his ſucceſſors, and that the PERSIANS, during all the confuſions and civil wars of the GREEKS, never made the ſmalleſt efforts towards the recovery of their former independent government. To ſatisfy us concerning the cauſe of this remarkable event, we may conſider, that a monarch may govern his ſubjects in two different ways. He may either follow the maxims of the eaſtern princes, and ſtretch ſo far as to leave no diſtinction of ranks among his ſubjects, but what proceeds immediately from himſelf; no advantages of birth; no hereditary honours and poſſeſſions; and, in a word, no credit among the people, except from his commiſſion alone. Or a monarch may exert his power after a milder manner, like our EUROPEAN princes; and leave other ſources of honour, beſide his ſmile and favour: Birth, titles, poſſeſſions, valour, integrity, knowledge, or great and fortunate atchievements. In the former ſpecies of government, after a conqueſt, 'tis impoſſible ever to ſhake off the yoke; ſince no one poſſeſſes, among the people, ſo much perſonal credit and authority as to begin ſuch an enterprize: Whereas, in the latter, the leaſt misfortune, or diſcord of the victors, will encourage the vanquiſhed to take arms, who have leaders ready to prompt and conduct them in every undertaking *.

Such

* I have taken it for granted, according to the ſuppoſition of MACHIAVEL, that the antient PERSIANS had no nobility; though there is reaſon to ſuſpect, that the FLORENTINE ſecretary, who ſeems to have been better acquainted with the ROMAN than the GREEK authors, was miſtaken in this particular. The more ancient PERSIANS, whoſe manners are deſcribed by XENOPHON, were a free people, and had nobility. Their ὁμοτιμοι were pre-

Such is the reaſoning of MACHIAVEL, which ſeems to me very ſolid and concluſive; though I wiſh he had not mixed falſhood with truth, in aſſerting, that monarchies governed according to the eaſtern policy, though more eaſily kept when once ſubdued, yet are the moſt

preſerved even after the extending of their conqueſts and the conſequent change of their government. ARRIAN mentions them in DARIUS's time, *De exped.* ALEX. lib. 2. Hiſtorians alſo ſpeak often of the perſons in command as men of family. TYGRANES, who was general of the MEDES under XERXES, was of the race of ACHMÆNES, HEROD. lib. 7. cap. 62. ARTACHÆES, who directed the cutting of the canal about mount ATHOS, was of the ſame family. Id. cap. 117. MEGABYZUS was one of the ſeven eminent PERSIANS who conſpired againſt the MAGI. His ſon, ZOPYRUS, was in the higheſt command under DARIUS, and delivered BABYLON to him. His grandſon, MEGABYZUS, commanded the army, defeated at MARATHON. His great grandſon ZOPYRUS, was alſo eminent, and was baniſhed PERSIA. HEROD. lib. 3. THUC. lib. 1. ROSACES, who commanded an army in Egypt under ARTAXERXES, was alſo deſcended from one of the ſeven conſpirators, DIOD. SIC. lib. 16. AGESILAUS, in XENOPHON, Hiſt. GRÆC. lib. 4. being deſirous of making a marriage betwixt king COTYS his ally, and the daughter of SPITHRIDATES, a PERSIAN of rank, who had deſerted to him, firſt aſks COTYS what family SPITHRIDATES is of. One of the moſt conſiderable in PERSIA, ſays COTYS. ARIÆUS, when offered the ſovereignty by CLEARCHUS and the ten thouſand GREEKS, refuſed it as of too low a rank, and ſaid, that ſo many eminent PERSIANS would never endure his rule. *Id. de exped.* lib. 2. Some of the families, deſcended from the ſeven PERSIANS abovementioned remained during all ALEXANDER's ſucceſſors; and MITHRIDATES, in ANTIOCHUS's time, is ſaid by POLYBIUS to be deſcended from one of them, lib. 5. cap. 43. ARTABAZUS was eſteemed, as ARRIAN ſays, ἐν τοῖς πρώτοις Πέρσαις. lib. 3. And when ALEXANDER married in one day 80 of his captains to PERSIAN women, his intention plainly was to ally the MACEDONIANS with the moſt eminent Perſian families. Id. lib. 7. DIODORUS SICULUS ſays they were of the moſt noble birth in PERSIA, lib. 17. The government of PERSIA was deſpotic, and conducted, in many reſpects, after the eaſtern manner, but was not carried ſo far as to extirpate all nobility, and confound all ranks and orders. It left men who were ſtill great, by themſelves and their family, independent of their office and commiſſion. And the reaſon why the MACEDONIANS kept ſo eaſily dominion over them was owing to other cauſes eaſy to be found in the hiſtorians; though it muſt be owned that MACHIAVEL's reaſoning is, in itſelf, juſt, however doubtful its application to the preſent caſe.

difficult to ſubdue; ſince they cannot contain any powerful ſubject whoſe diſcontent and faction may facilitate the enterprizes of an enemy. For beſides, that ſuch a tyrannical government enervates the courage of men, and renders them indifferent towards the fortunes of their ſovereign; beſides this, I ſay, we find by experience, that even the temporary and delegated authority of the generals and magiſtrates; being always, in ſuch governments, as abſolute within its ſphere, as that of the prince himſelf; is able, with barbarians accuſtomed to a blind ſubmiſſion, to produce the moſt dangerous and fatal revolutions. So that, in every reſpect, a gentle government is preferable, and gives the greateſt ſecurity to the ſovereign as well as to the ſubject.

Legiſlators, therefore, ought not to truſt the future government of a ſtate entirely to chance, but ought to provide a ſyſtem of laws to regulate the adminiſtration of public affairs to the lateſt poſterity. Effects will always correſpond to cauſes; and wiſe regulations in any commonwealth, are the moſt valuable legacy which can be left to future ages. In the ſmalleſt court or office, the ſtated forms and methods, by which buſineſs muſt be conducted, are found to be a conſiderable check on the natural depravity of mankind. Why ſhould not the caſe be the ſame in public affairs? Can we aſcribe the ſtability and wiſdom of the VENETIAN government, through ſo many ages, to any thing but the form of government? And is it not eaſy to point out thoſe defects in the original conſtitution, which produced the tumultuous governments of ATHENS and ROME, and ended at laſt in the ruin of theſe two famous republics? And ſo little dependance has this affair on the humours and education of particular men, that one part of the ſame republic may be wiſely conducted, and another weakly, by the very ſame men, merely on account of the difference of the forms and inſtitutions, by which theſe parts

are

are regulated. Hiſtorians inform us that this was actually the caſe with GENOA. For while the ſtate was always full of ſedition, and tumult, and diſorder, the bank of St. GEORGE, which had become a conſiderable part of the people, was conducted, for ſeveral ages, with the utmoſt integrity and wiſdom *.

The ages of greateſt publick ſpirit are not always moſt eminent for private virtue. Good laws may beget order and moderation in the government, where the manners and cuſtoms have inſtilled little humanity or juſtice into the tempers of men. The moſt illuſtrious period of the ROMAN hiſtory, conſidered in a political view, is that between the beginning of the firſt and the end of the laſt PUNIC war; the due balance between the nobility and people being then fixed by the conteſts of the tribunes, and not being yet loſt by the extent of conqueſts. Yet at this very time, the horrid practice of poiſoning was ſo common, that, during part of a ſeaſon, a *Prætor* puniſhed capitally for this crime above three thouſand † perſons in a part of ITALY; and found informations of this nature ſtill multiplying upon him. There is a ſimilar, or rather a worſe inſtance ‡, in the more early times of the commonwealth. So depraved in private life were that people, whom in their hiſtories we ſo much admire. I doubt not but they were really more virtuous during the time of the two *Triumvirates*, when they were tearing their common country to pieces, and ſpreading

* *Eſſempio veramente raro, & da Filoſofi intante loro imaginate & vedute Republiche mai non trovato, vedere dentro ad un medeſimo cerchio, fra medeſimi cittadini, la liberta, & la tirannide, la vita civile & la corotta, la giuſtitia & la licenza; perche quello or dine ſolo mantiene quella citta piena di coſtumi antichi & venerabili. E ſegli auveniſſe (che col tempo in ogni modo auverrà) que* SAN GIORGIO *tutta quel la città occupaſſe, ſarrebbe quella una Republica pin dalla* VENETIANA *memorabile.*

Della Hiſt. Florentinè, lib. 8.

† T. LIVII, lib. 40. cap. 43.

‡ *Id.* lib. 8. cap. 18.

ſlaughter

ſlaughter and deſolation over the face of the earth, merely for the choice of tyrants *.

Here, then, is a ſufficient inducement to maintain, with the utmoſt ZEAL, in every free ſtate, thoſe forms and inſtitutions by which liberty is ſecured, the publick good conſulted, and the avarice or ambition of particular men reſtrained and puniſhed. Nothing does more honour to human nature, than to ſee it ſuſceptible of ſo noble a paſſion; as nothing can be a greater indication of meanneſs of heart in any man, than to ſee him devoid of it. A man who loves only himſelf, without regard to friendſhip and merit, is a deteſtable monſter; and a man, who is only ſuſceptible of friendſhip, without publick ſpirit, or a regard to the community, is deficient in the moſt material part of virtue.

But this is a ſubject which needs not be longer inſiſted on at preſent. There are enow of zealots on both ſides who kindle up the paſſions of their partizans, and under the pretence of publick good, purſue the intereſts and ends of their particular faction. For my part, I ſhall always be more fond of promoting moderation than zeal; though perhaps the ſureſt way of producing moderation in every party is to increaſe our zeal for the publick. Let us therefore try, if it be poſſible, from the foregoing doctrine, to draw a leſſon of moderation with regard to the parties into which our country is at preſent divided; at the ſame time, that we allow not this moderation to abate the induſtry and paſſion with which every individual is bound to purſue the good of his country.

Thoſe who either attack or defend a miniſter in ſuch a government as ours, where the utmoſt liberty is allowed, always carry matters to an extreme, and exaggerate his merit or demerit with regard to the public. His ene-

* *L'Aigle contre L'Aigle,* ROMAINS *contre* ROMAINS,
Combataus ſeulement pour le choix de tyrans. CORNEILLE.

mies

mies are ſure to charge him with the greateſt enormities, both in domeſtic and foreign management; and there is no meanneſs nor crime, of which, in their account, he is not capable. Unneceſſary wars, ſcandalous treaties, profuſion of public treaſure, oppreſſive taxes, every kind of mal-adminiſtration is aſcribed to him. To aggravate the charge, his pernicious conduct, it is ſaid, will extend its baleful influence even to poſterity, by undermining the beſt conſtitution in the world, and diſordering that wiſe ſyſtem of laws, inſtitutions and cuſtoms, by which our anceſtors, for ſo many centuries, have been ſo happily governed. He is not only a wicked miniſter in himſelf, but has removed every ſecurity provided againſt wicked miniſters for the future.

On the other hand, the partizans of the miniſter make his panegyric run as high as the accuſation againſt him, and celebrate his wiſe, ſteady and moderate conduct in every part of his adminiſtration. The honour and intereſt of the nation ſupported abroad, public credit maintained at home, perſecution reſtrained, faction ſubdued; the merit of all theſe bleſſings is aſcribed ſolely to the miniſter. At the ſame time he crowns all his other merits, by a religious care of the beſt conſtitution in the world, which he has preſerved in all its parts, and has tranſmitted entire, to be the happineſs and ſecurity of the lateſt poſterity.

When this accuſation and panegyric are received by the partizans of each party, no wonder they beget a moſt extraordinary ferment on both ſides, and fill the nation with the moſt violent animoſities. But I would fain perſuade theſe party-zealots, that there is a flat contradiction both in the accuſation and panegyric, and that it were impoſſible for either of them to run ſo high, were it not for this contradiction. If our conſtitution be really

that

that noble fabric, the pride of BRITAIN, *the envy of our neighbours, raiſed by the labour of ſo many centuries, repaired at the expence of ſo many millions, and cemented by ſuch a profuſion of blood* *; I ſay, if our conſtitution does in any degree deſerve theſe eulogies, it would never have ſuffered a wicked and weak miniſter to govern triumphantly for a courſe of twenty years, when oppoſed by the greateſt geniuſes of the nation, who exerciſed the utmoſt liberty of tongue and pen, in parliament, and in their frequent appeals to the people. But, if the miniſter be wicked and weak, to the degree ſo ſtrenuouſly inſiſted on, the conſtitution muſt be faulty in its original principles, and he cannot conſiſtently be charged with undermining the beſt conſtitution in the world. A conſtitution is only ſo far good, as it provides a remedy againſt mal-adminiſtration; and if the BRITISH conſtitution, when in its greateſt vigour, and repaired by two ſuch remarkable events, as the *Revolution* and *Acceſſion*, by which our ancient royal family was ſacrificed to it; if our conſtitution, I ſay, with ſo great advantages, does not, in fact, provide any ſuch remedy, we are rather beholden to any miniſter who undermines it, and affords us an opportunity of erecting in its place a better conſtitution.

I would make uſe of the ſame topics to moderate the zeal of thoſe who defend the miniſter. *Is our conſtitution ſo excellent?* Then a change of miniſtry can be no ſuch dreadful event; ſince it is eſſential to ſuch a conſtitution, in every miniſtry, both to preſerve itſelf from violation, and to prevent all enormities in the adminiſtration. *Is our conſtitution very bad?* Then ſo extraordinary a jealouſy and apprehenſion, on account of changes, is ill-placed; and a man ſhould no more be anxious in this caſe, than a huſband, who had married a woman from the ſtews,

* *Diſſertation on parties*, Letter 10.

ſhould

ſhould be watchful to prevent her infidelity. Public affairs, in ſuch a conſtitution, muſt neceſſarily go to confuſion, by whatever hands they are conducted; and the zeal of *patriots* is much leſs requiſite in that caſe than the patience and ſubmiſſion of *philoſophers*. The virtue and good intentions of CATO and BRUTUS are highly laudable; but, to what purpoſe did their zeal ſerve? To nothing, but to haſten the fatal period of the ROMAN government, and render its convulſions and dying agonies more violent and painful.

I would not be underſtood to mean, that public affairs deſerve no care and attention at all. Would men be moderate and conſiſtent, their claims might be admitted; at leaſt might be examined. The *country-party* might ſtill aſſert, that our conſtitution, though excellent, will admit of mal-adminiſtration to a certain degree; and therefore, if the miniſter be bad, it is proper to oppoſe him with a *ſuitable* degree of zeal. And, on the other hand, the *court party* may be allowed, upon the ſuppoſition that the miniſter were good, to defend, and with *ſome* zeal too, his adminiſtration. I would only perſuade men not to contend, as if they were fighting *pro aris & focis*, and change a good conſtitution into a bad one, by the violence of their factions *.

I

* *What our author's opinion was of the famous miniſter here pointed at, may be learned from that eſſay, printed in the former editions, under the title of* A character of Sir ROBERT WALPOLE: *It was as follows:* There never was a man, whoſe actions and character have been more earneſtly and openly canvaſſed, than thoſe of the preſent miniſter, who, having governed a learned and free nation for ſo long a time, amidſt ſuch mighty oppoſition, may make a large library of what has been wrote for and againſt him, and is the ſubject of above half the paper that has been blotted in the nation within theſe twenty years. I wiſh for the honour of our country, that any one character of him had been drawn with ſuch *judgment* and *impartiality*, as to have credit with poſterity, and to ſhew, that our liberty has, once at leaſt, been employed to good purpoſe. I am only afraid of failing in the former quality of judgment: But if it ſhould be ſo, 'tis but one page more

I have not here conſidered any thing that is perſonal in the preſent controverſy. In the beſt civil conſtitution, where every man is reſtrained by the moſt rigid laws, it is eaſy to diſcover either the good or bad intentions of a miniſter, and to judge, whether his perſonal character deſerves love or hatred. But ſuch queſtions are of little importance to the public, and lay thoſe who employ their pens upon them, under a juſt ſuſpicion either of malevolence or flattery.

more thrown away, after an hundred thouſand, upon the ſame ſubject, that have periſhed, and become uſeleſs. In the mean time, I ſhall flatter myſelf with the pleaſing imagination, that the following character will be adopted by future hiſtorians.

Sir *ROBERT WALPOLE*, prime miniſter of GREAT BRITAIN, is a man of ability, not a genius; good-natured, not virtuous; conſtant, not magnanimous; moderate, not equitable †. His virtues, in ſome inſtances, are free from the allay of thoſe vices, which uſually accompany ſuch virtues: He is a generous friend, without being a bitter enemy. His vices, in other inſtances, are not compenſated by thoſe virtues which are nearly allyed to them: His want of enterpriſe is not attended with frugality. The private character of the man is better than the publick: His virtues more than his vices: His fortune greater than his fame. With many good qualities he has incurred the publick hatred: With good capacity he has not eſcaped ridicule. He would have been eſteemed more worthy of his high ſtation had he never poſſeſſed it; and is better qualified for the ſecond than for the firſt place in any government. His miniſtry has been more advantageous to his family than to the publick, better for this age than for poſterity, and more pernicious by bad precedents than by real grievances. During his time trade has flouriſhed, liberty declined, and learning gone to ruin. As I am a man, I love him; as I am a ſcholar, I hate him; as I am a BRITON, I calmly wiſh his fall. And were I a member of either houſe, I would give my vote for removing him from ST. JAMES'S; but ſhould be glad to ſee him retire to HOUGHTON-HALL, to paſs the remainder of his days in eaſe and pleaſure.

The author is pleaſed to find, that after animoſities are laid, and calumny has ceaſed, the whole nation almoſt have returned to the ſame moderate ſentiments with regard to this great man, if they are not rather become more favourable to him, by a very natural tranſition, from one extreme to another. The author would not oppoſe thoſe humane ſentiments towards the dead; though he cannot forbear obſerving, that the not paying more of our publick debts was, as hinted in this character, a great, and the only great, error in that long adminiſtration.

† *Moderate in the exerciſe of power, not equitable in engroſſing it.*

ESSAY

ESSAY IV.

Of the First Principles of Government.

NOTHING is more ſurprizing to thoſe, who conſider human affairs with a philoſophical eye, than to ſee the eaſineſs with which the many are governed by the few; and to obſerve the implicit ſubmiſſion with which men reſign their own ſentiments and paſſions to thoſe of their rulers. When we enquire by what means this wonder is brought about, we ſhall find, that as Force is always on the ſide of the governed, the governors have nothing to ſupport them but opinion. 'Tis therefore, on opinion only that government is founded; and this maxim extends to the moſt deſpotic and moſt military governments, as well as to the moſt free and moſt popular. The ſoldan of Egypt, or the emperor of Rome, might drive his harmleſs ſubjects, like brute beaſts, againſt their ſentiments and inclination: But he muſt, at leaſt, have led his *mamalukes*, or *prætorian bands*, like men, by their opinion.

Opinion is of two kinds, *viz.* opinion of interest, and opinion of right. By opinion of intereſt, I chiefly underſtand the ſenſe of the public advantage which is reaped from government; together with the perſuaſion, that the particular government, which is eſtabliſhed, is equally advantageous with any other that could eaſily be ſettled. When this opinion prevails among the generality of a ſtate, or among thoſe who have the force in

in their hands, it gives great ſecurity to any government.

Right is of two kinds, right to POWER and right to PROPERTY. What prevalence opinion of the firſt kind has over mankind, may eaſily be underſtood by obſerving the attachment which all nations have to their ancient government, and even to thoſe names which have had the ſanction of antiquity. Antiquity always begets the opinion of right; and whatever diſadvantageous ſentiments we may entertain of mankind, they are always found to be prodigal both of blood and treaſure in the maintenance of public juſtice. This paſſion we may denominate enthuſiaſm, or we may give it what appellation we pleaſe; but a politician, who ſhould overlook its influence on human affairs, would prove himſelf but of a very limited underſtanding. There is, indeed, no particular, in which, at firſt ſight, there may appear a greater contradiction in the frame of the human mind than the preſent. When men act in a faction, they are apt, without any ſhame or remorſe, to neglect all the ties of honour and morality, in order to ſerve their party; and yet, when a faction is formed upon a point of right or principle, there is no occaſion, where men diſcover a greater obſtinacy, and a more determined ſenſe of juſtice and equity. The ſame ſocial diſpoſition of mankind is the cauſe of both theſe contradictory appearances.

'Tis ſufficiently underſtood, that the opinion of right to property is of the greateſt moment in all matters of government. A noted author has made property the foundation of all government; and moſt of our political writers ſeem inclined to follow him in that particular. This is carrying the matter too far; but ſtill it muſt be owned, that the opinion of right to property has a great influence in this ſubject.

Upon theſe three opinions, therefore, of public *intereſt*, of *right to power*, and of *right to property*, are all go-

governments founded, and all authority of the few over the many. There are indeed other principles, which add force to theſe, and determine, limit, or alter their operation; ſuch as *ſelf-intereſt*, *fear*, and *affection*: But ſtill we may aſſert, that theſe other principles can have no influence alone, but ſuppoſe the antecedent influence of thoſe opinions above-mentioned. They are, therefore, to be eſteemed the ſecondary, not the original principles of government.

For, *firſt*, as to *ſelf-intereſt*, by which I mean the expectation of particular rewards, diſtinct from the general protection which we receive from government, 'tis evident that the magiſtrate's authority muſt be antecedently eſtabliſhed, or, at leaſt be hoped for, in order to produce this expectation. The proſpect of reward may augment the authority with regard to ſome particular perſons; but can never give birth to it, with regard to the public. Men naturally look for the greateſt favours from their friends and acquaintance; and therefore, the hopes of any conſiderable number of the ſtate, would never center in any particular ſet of men, if theſe men had no other title to magiſtracy, and had no ſeparate influence over the opinions of mankind. The ſame obſervation may be extended to the other two principles of *fear* and *affection*. No man would have any reaſon to *fear* the fury of a tyrant, if he had no authority over any but from fear; ſince, as a ſingle man, his bodily force can reach but a ſmall way, and all farther power he poſſeſſes muſt be founded either on our own opinion, or on the preſumed opinion of others. And tho' *affection* to wiſdom and virtue in a *ſovereign* extends very far, and has great influence; yet he muſt be antecedently ſuppoſed inveſted with a public character, otherwiſe the public eſteem will ſerve him in no ſtead, nor will his virtue have any influence beyond a narrow ſphere.

A Government may endure for ſeveral ages, tho' the balance of power, and the balance of property do not agree. This chiefly happens, where any rank or order of the ſtate has acquired a large ſhare of the property; but, from the original conſtitution of the government, has no ſhare of the power. Under what pretext would any individual of that order aſſume authority in public affairs? As men are commonly much attached to their ancient government, it is not to be expected, that the public would ever favour ſuch uſurpations. But where the original conſtitution allows any ſhare of power, tho' ſmall, to an order of men, who poſſeſs a large ſhare of the property, 'tis eaſy for them gradually to ſtretch their authority, and bring the balance of power to coincide with that of property. This has been the caſe with the houſe of commons in ENGLAND.

Moſt writers, who have treated of the BRITISH government, have ſuppoſed, that as the houſe of commons repreſents all the commons of GREAT BRITAIN; ſo its weight in the ſcale is proportioned to the property and power of all whom it repreſents. But this principle muſt not be received as abſolutely true. For tho' the people are apt to attach themſelves more to the houſe of commons, than to any other member of the conſtitution; that houſe being choſen by them as their repreſentatives, and as the public guardians of their liberty; yet are there inſtances where the houſe, even when in oppoſition to the crown, has not been followed by the people; as we may particularly obſerve of the *tory* houſe of commons in the reign of king WILLIAM. Were the members of the houſe obliged to receive inſtructions from their conſtituents, like the DUTCH deputies, this would entirely alter the caſe; and, if ſuch immenſe power and riches, as thoſe of the whole commons of BRITAIN, were brought into the ſcale, 'tis not eaſy to conceive,

that

that the crown could either influence that multitude of people, or withſtand that overbalance of property. 'Tis true, the crown has great influence over the collective body of BRITAIN in the elections of members; but were this influence, which at preſent is only exerted once in ſeven years, to be employed in bringing over the people to every vote, it would ſoon be waſted; and no ſkill, popularity or revenue, could ſupport it. I muſt, therefore, be of opinion, that an alteration, in this particular, would introduce a total alteration in our government, and would ſoon reduce it to a pure republic; and, perhaps, to a republic of no inconvenient form. For tho' the people collected in a body like the ROMAN tribes, be quite unfit for government, yet when diſperſed in ſmall bodies, they are more ſuſceptible both of reaſon and order; the force of popular currents and tides is, in a great meaſure, broke; and the public intereſt may be purſued with ſome method and conſtancy. But 'tis needleſs to reaſon any farther concerning a form of government, which is never likely to have place in BRITAIN, and which ſeems not to be the aim of any party amongſt us. Let us cheriſh and improve our ancient government as much as poſſible, without encouraging a paſſion for ſuch dangerous novelties.

ESSAY V.

Of the INDEPENDENCY of PARLIAMENT.

POLITICAL writers have eſtabliſhed it as a maxim, That in contriving any ſyſtem of government, and fixing the ſeveral checks and controuls of the conſtitution, every man ought to be ſuppoſed a *knave*, and to have no other end, in all his actions, but private intereſt. By this intereſt we muſt govern him, and, by means of it, make him co-operate to public good, notwithſtanding his inſatiable avarice and ambition. Without this, ſay they, we ſhall in vain boaſt of the advantages of any conſtitution, and ſhall find, in the end, that we have no ſecurity for our liberties or poſſeſſions, except the good-will of our rulers; that is, we ſhall have no ſecurity at all.

'Tis, therefore a juſt *political* maxim, *That every man muſt be ſuppoſed a knave:* Tho' at the ſame time, it appears ſomewhat ſtrange, that a maxim ſhould be true in *politics*, which is falſe in *fact*. But to ſatisfy us on this head, we may conſider, that men are generally more honeſt in their private than in their public capacity, and will go greater lengths to ſerve a party, than when their own private intereſt is alone concerned. Honour is a great check upon mankind: But where a conſiderable body of men act together, this check is, in a great meaſure, removed; ſince a man is ſure to be approved of by

his own party, for what promotes the common intereſt, and he ſoon learns to deſpiſe the clamours of his adverſaries. To which we may add, that every court or ſenate is determined by the greater number of voices; ſo that, if ſelf-intereſt influences only the majority, (as it will always do) the whole ſenate follows the allurements of this ſeparate intereſt, and acts as if it contained not one member, who had any regard to public intereſt and liberty.

When there offers, therefore, to our cenſure, and examination, any plan of government, real or imaginary, where the power is diſtributed among ſeveral courts, and ſeveral orders of men, we ſhould always conſider the private intereſt of each court, and each order; and, if we find, that, by the ſkilful diviſion of the power, the private intereſt muſt neceſſarily, in its operation, concur with the public, we may pronounce that government to be wiſe and happy. If, on the contrary, the private intereſt of each order be not checked, and be not directed to public intereſt, we ought to look for nothing but faction, diſorder, and tyranny from ſuch a government. In this opinion I am juſtified by experience, as well as by the authority of all philoſophers and politicians both antient and modern.

How much, therefore, would it have ſurprized ſuch a genius as CICERO, or TACITUS, to have been told, That, in a future age, there ſhould ariſe a very regular ſyſtem of *mixt* government, where the authority was ſo diſtributed, that one rank, whenever it pleaſed, might ſwallow up all the reſt, and engroſs the whole power of the conſtitution. Such a government, they would ſay, will not be a mixed government. For ſo great is the natural ambition of men, that they are never ſatisfied with power; and if one order of men, by purſuing its own intereſt, can uſurp upon every other order, it will

will certainly do ſo, and render itſelf, as far as poſſible, abſolute and uncontroulable.

But, in this opinion, experience ſhews they would have been miſtaken. For this is actually the caſe with the BRITISH conſtitution. The ſhare of power allotted by our conſtitution to the houſe of commons is ſo great, that it abſolutely commands all the other parts of the government. The king's legiſlative power is plainly no proper check to it. For tho' the king has a negative in the paſſing of laws; yet this, in fact, is eſteemed of ſo little moment, that whatever is voted by the two houſes, is always ſure to be paſſed into a law, and the royal aſſent is little better than a mere form. The principal weight of the crown lies in the executive power. But beſides that the executive power in every government, is altogether ſubordinate to the legiſlative; beſides this, I ſay, the exerciſe of this power requires an immenſe expence, and the commons have aſſumed to themſelves the ſole power of diſpoſing of public money. How eaſy, therefore, would it be for that houſe to wreſt from the crown all theſe powers, one after another, by making every grant of money conditional, and chooſing their time ſo well, that their refuſal of ſubſidies ſhould only diſtreſs the government, without giving foreign powers any advantage over us? Did the houſe of commons depend in the ſame manner on the king, and had none of the members any property but from his gift, would not he command all their reſolutions, and be from that moment abſolute? As to the houſe of lords, they are a very powerful ſupport to the crown ſo long as they are, in their turn, ſupported by it; but both experience and reaſon ſhew us, that they have no force nor authority ſufficient to maintain themſelves alone, without ſuch ſupport.

How, therefore, ſhall we ſolve this paradox? And by what means is this member of our conſtitution confined within the proper limits; ſince, from our very conſtitution, it muſt neceſſarily have as much power as it demands, and can only be confined by itſelf? How is this conſiſtent with our experience of human nature? I anſwer, That the intereſt of the body is here reſtrained by the intereſt of the individuals, and that the houſe of commons ſtretches not its power, becauſe ſuch an uſurpation would be contrary to the intereſt of the majority of its members. The crown has ſo many offices at its diſpoſal, that, when aſſiſted by the honeſt and diſintereſted part of the houſe, it will always command the reſolutions of the whole; ſo far at leaſt, as to preſerve the ancient conſtitution from danger. We may, therefore, give to this influence what name we pleaſe; we may call it by the invidious appellations of *corruption* and *dependence*; but ſome degree and ſome kind of it are inſeparable from the very nature of the conſtitution, and neceſſary to the preſervation of our mixed government.

Inſtead then of aſſerting † abſolutely, that the dependence of parliament, in every degree, is an infringement of BRITISH liberty, the country-party had better have made ſome conceſſions to their adverſaries, and have only examined what was the proper degree of this dependence, beyond which it became dangerous to liberty. But ſuch a moderation is not to be expected of party-men of any kind. After a conceſſion of this nature, all declamation muſt be abandoned; and a ſerious calm enquiry into the proper degree of court-influence, and parliamentary dependence would have been expected by the readers. And tho' the advantage, in ſuch a controverſy, might poſſibly remain to the *country-party*; yet the vic-

† See *Diſſertation on Parties*, throughout.

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tory would not be ſo compleat as they wiſh for, nor would a true patriot have given an entire looſe to his zeal, for fear of running matters into a contrary extreme, by diminiſhing too † far the influence of the crown. It was, therefore, thought beſt to deny, that this extreme could ever be dangerous to the conſtitution, or that the crown could ever have too little influence over members of parliament.

All queſtions concerning the proper medium between any two extremes are very difficult to be decided; both becauſe it is not eaſy to find *words* proper to fix this medium, and becauſe the good and ill, in ſuch caſes, run ſo gradually into each other, as even to render our *ſentiments* doubtful and uncertain. But there is a peculiar difficulty in the preſent caſe, which would embarraſs the moſt knowing and moſt impartial examiner. The power of the crown is always lodged in a ſingle perſon, either king or miniſter; and as this perſon may have either a greater or leſs degree of ambition, capacity, courage, popularity or fortune, the power, which is too great in one hand, may become too little in another. In pure republics, where the power is diſtributed among ſeveral aſſemblies or ſenates, the checks and controuls are more regular in their operation; becauſe the members of ſuch numerous aſſemblies may be preſumed to be always nearly equal in capacity and virtue; and 'tis only their number, riches, or authority, which enter into

† By that *influence of the crown*, which I would juſtify, I mean only, that ariſing from the offices and honours which are at the diſpoſal of the crown. As to private *bribery*, it may be conſidered in the ſame light as the practice of employing ſpies, which is ſcarce juſtifiable in a good miniſter, and is infamous in a bad one: But to be a ſpy, or to be corrupted, is always infamous under all miniſters, and is to be regarded as a ſhameleſs proſtitution. POLYBIUS juſtly eſteems the pecuniary influence of the ſenate and cenſors to be one of the regular and conſtitutional weights, which preſerved the balance of the ROMAN government. Lib. 6. cap. 15.

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consideration. But a limited monarchy admits not of any such stability; nor is it possible to assign to the crown such a determinate degree of power, as will, in every hand, form a proper counter-balance to the other parts of the constitution. This is an unavoidable disadvantage, among the many advantages, attending that species of government.

ESSAY VI.

Whether the BRITISH GOVERNMENT inclines more to ABSOLUTE MONARCHY, or to a REPUBLIC.

IT affords a violent prejudice againſt almoſt every ſcience, that no prudent man, however ſure of his principles, dares propheſy concerning any event, or foretell the remote conſequences of things. A phyſician will not venture to pronounce concerning the condition of his patient a fortnight or month after: And ſtill leſs dares a politician foretel the ſituation of public affairs a few years hence. HARRINGTON thought himſelf ſo ſure of his general principle, *That the balance of power depends on that of property*, that he ventured to pronounce it impoſſible ever to re-eſtabliſh monarchy in ENGLAND: But his book was ſcarce publiſhed when the king was reſtored; and we ſee that monarchy has ever ſince ſubſiſted upon the ſame footing as before. Notwithſtanding this unlucky example, I will venture to examine a very important queſtion, *viz. Whether the* BRITISH *government inclines more to abſolute monarchy, or to a republic; and in which of theſe two ſpecies of government it will moſt probably terminate?* As there ſeems not to be any great danger of a ſudden revolution either way, I ſhall at leaſt eſcape the ſhame attending my temerity, if I ſhould be found to have been miſtaken.

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Thoſe who aſſert, That the balance of our government inclines towards abſolute monarchy, may ſupport their opinion by the following reaſons. That property has a great influence on power cannot poſſibly be denied; but yet the general maxim, *That the balance of one depends on the balance of the other*, muſt be received with ſeveral limitations. 'Tis evident, that much leſs property in a ſingle hand will be able to counter-balance a greater property in ſeveral hands; not only becauſe it is difficult to make many perſons combine in the ſame views and meaſures; but alſo becauſe property, when united, cauſes much greater dependance, than the ſame property, when diſperſed. An hundred perſons, of 1000 *l.* a year a-piece, can conſume all their income, and no body ſhall ever be the better for them, except their ſervants and tradeſmen, who juſtly regard their profits as the product of their own labour. But a man poſſeſſed of 100,000 *l.* a year, if he has either any generoſity, or any cunning, may create a great dependance by obligations, and ſtill a greater by expectations. Hence we may obſerve, that in all free governments any ſubject exorbitantly rich has always created a jealouſy, even tho' his riches bore no manner of proportion to the riches of the ſtate. CRASSUS's fortune, if I remember well, amounted only to about ſixteen hundred thouſand pounds in our money; and yet we find, that tho' his genius was nothing extraordinary, he was able, by means of his riches alone, to counter-balance, during his life-time, the power of POMPEY as well as that of CÆSAR, who afterwards became maſter of the world. The wealth of the MEDICIS made them maſters of FLORENCE; tho', 'tis probable, it was very inconſiderable, compared to the united property of that opulent republic.

Theſe conſiderations are apt to make one entertain a very magnificent idea of the BRITISH ſpirit and love of

of liberty; ſince we could maintain our free government, during ſo many centuries, againſt our ſovereigns, who, beſides the power and dignity and majeſty of the crown, have always been poſſeſſed of much more property than any ſubject has ever enjoyed in any commonwealth. But it may be ſaid, that this ſpirit, however great, will never be able to ſupport itſelf againſt that immenſe property, which is now lodged in the king, and which is ſtill increaſing. Upon a moderate computation, there are near three millions at the diſpoſal of the crown. The civil liſt amounts to near a million; the collection of all taxes to another million; and the employments in the army and navy, together with eccleſiaſtical preferments, to above a third million: An enormous ſum, and what may fairly be computed to be more than a thirtieth part of the whole income and labour of the kingdom. When we add to this immenſe property, the increaſing luxury of the nation, our proneneſs to corruption, together with the great power and prerogatives of the crown, and the command of ſuch numerous military forces, there is no one but muſt deſpair of being able, without extraordinary efforts, to ſupport our free government much longer under all theſe diſadvantages.

On the other hand, thoſe who maintain, that the byaſs of the BRITISH government leans towards a republic, may ſupport their opinion by very ſpecious arguments. It may be ſaid, that tho' this immenſe property in the crown, be joined to the dignity of firſt magiſtrate, and to many other legal powers and prerogatives, which ſhould naturally give it a greater influence; yet it really becomes leſs dangerous to liberty upon that very account. Were BRITAIN a republic, and were any private man poſſeſſed of a revenue, a

third,

third, or even a tenth part as large as that of the crown, he would very juſtly excite jealouſy; becauſe he would infallibly have great authority in the government: And ſuch an irregular authority, not avowed by the laws, is always more dangerous than a much greater authority, which is derived from them. A man poſſeſſed of uſurped power, can ſet no bounds to its pretenſions: His partizans have liberty to hope for every thing in his favour: His enemies provoke his ambition, with his fears, by the violence of their oppoſition: And the government being thrown into a ferment, every corrupted humour in the ſtate naturally gathers to him. On the contrary, a legal authority, tho' very great, has always ſome bounds, which terminate both the hopes and pretenſions of the perſon poſſeſſed of it: The laws muſt have provided a remedy againſt its exceſſes: Such an eminent magiſtrate has much to fear, and little to hope from his uſurpations: And as his legal authority is quietly ſubmitted to, he has ſmall temptation and ſmall opportunity of extending it farther. Beſides, it happens, with regard to ambitious aims and projects, what may be obſerved with regard to ſects of philoſophy and religion. A new ſect excites ſuch a ferment, and is both oppoſed and defended with ſuch vehemence, that it ſpreads always faſter, and multiplies its partizans with greater rapidity, than any old eſtabliſhed opinion, recommended by the ſanction of the laws and of antiquity. Such is the nature of novelty, that where any thing pleaſes it becomes doubly agreeable, if new; but if it diſpleaſes, it is doubly diſpleaſing, upon that very account. And, in moſt caſes, the violence of enemies is favourable to ambitious projects, as well as the zeal of partizans.

It may further be ſaid, that tho' men be very much governed by intereſt; yet even intereſt itſelf, and all human affairs, are entirely governed by *opinion*. Now, there has been a very ſudden and a very ſenſible change in the opinions of men within theſe laſt fifty years by the progreſs of learning and of liberty. Moſt people, in this iſland, have diveſted themſelves of all ſuperſtitious reverence to names and authority: The clergy have much loſt their credit: Their pretenſions and doctrines have been ridiculed; and even religion can ſcarce ſupport itſelf in the world. The mere name of *king* commands little reſpect; and to talk of a king as GOD's vicegerent on earth, or to give him any of thoſe magnificent titles, which formerly dazzled mankind, would but excite laughter in every one. Tho' the crown, by means of its large revenue, may maintain its authority in times of tranquillity, upon private intereſt and influence; yet as the leaſt ſhock or convulſion muſt break all theſe intereſts to pieces, the kingly power, being no longer ſupported by the ſettled principles and opinions of men, will immediately diſſolve. Had men been in the ſame diſpoſition at the *revolution*, as they are at preſent, monarchy would have run a great riſque of being entirely loſt in this iſland.

Durſt I venture to deliver my own ſentiments amidſt theſe oppoſite arguments, I would aſſert, that unleſs there happen ſome extraordinary convulſion, the power of the crown, by means of its large revenue, is rather upon the increaſe; tho', at the ſame time I own, that its progreſs ſeems very ſlow, and almoſt inſenſible. The tide has run long, and with ſome rapidity, to the ſide of popular government, and is juſt beginning to turn towards monarchy.

'Tis

'Tis well known that every government muſt come to a period, and that death is unavoidable to the political as well as to the animal body. But, as one kind of death may be preferable to another, it may be enquired, whether it be more deſirable for the BRITISH conſtitution to terminate in a popular government, or in abſolute monarchy? Here I would declare frankly, that tho' liberty be infinitely preferable to ſlavery, in almoſt every caſe; yet I ſhould much rather wiſh to ſee an abſolute monarch than a republic in this iſland. For, let us conſider, what kind of republic we have reaſon to expect. The queſtion is not concerning any fine imaginary republic, of which a man may form a plan in his cloſet. There is no doubt, but a popular government may be imagined more perfect than abſolute monarchy, or even than our preſent conſtitution. But what reaſon have we to expect that any ſuch government will ever be eſtabliſhed in BRITAIN, upon the diſſolution of our monarchy? If any ſingle perſon acquire power enough to take our conſtitution to pieces, and put it up a-new, he is really an abſolute monarch; and we have had already an inſtance of this kind, ſufficient to convince us, that ſuch a perſon will never reſign his power, or eſtabliſh any free government. Matters, therefore, muſt be truſted to their natural progreſs and operation; and the houſe of commons, according to its preſent conſtitution, muſt be the only legiſlature in ſuch a popular government. The inconveniencies, attending ſuch a ſituation of affairs, preſent themſelves by thouſands. If the houſe of commons, in ſuch a caſe, ever diſſolves itſelf, which is not to be expected, we may look for a civil war every election. If it continues itſelf, we ſhall ſuffer all the tyranny of a faction, ſubdivided into new factions. And as ſuch a violent government cannot long ſubſiſt, we ſhall, at laſt, after infinite convulſions, and

civil

civil wars, find repoſe in abſolute monarchy, which it would have been happier for us to have eſtabliſhed peaceably from the beginning. Abſolute monarchy, therefore, is the eaſieſt death, the true *Euthanaſia* of the BRITISH conſtitution.

Thus, if we have reaſon to be more jealous of monarchy, becauſe the danger is more imminent from that quarter; we have alſo reaſon to be more jealous of popular government, becauſe that danger is more terrible. This may teach us a leſſon of moderation in all our political controverſies.

ESSAY VII.

Of PARTIES in GENERAL.

OF all men, who diſtinguiſh themſelves by memorable atchievements, the firſt place of honour ſeems due to LEGISLATORS, and founders of ſtates, who tranſmit a ſyſtem of laws and inſtitutions to ſecure the peace, happineſs, and liberty of future generations. The influence of uſeful inventions in the arts and ſciences may, perhaps, extend farther than thoſe of wiſe laws, whoſe effects are limited both in time and place; but the benefit ariſing from the former is not ſo ſenſible as that which proceeds from the latter. Speculative ſciences do, indeed, improve the mind; but this advantage reaches only to a few perſons, who have leiſure to apply themſelves to them. And as to practical arts, which increaſe the commodities and enjoyments of life, it is well known, that mens happineſs conſiſts not ſo much in an abundance of theſe, as in the peace and ſecurity with which they poſſeſs them; and thoſe bleſſings can only be derived from good government. Not to mention, that general virtue and good morals in a ſtate, which are ſo requiſite to happineſs, can never ariſe from the moſt refined precepts of philoſophy, or even the ſevereſt injunctions of religion; but muſt proceed entirely from the virtuous education of the youth, the effect of wiſe laws and inſtitutions. I muſt, therefore, preſume to differ from my Lord BACON in this particular, and muſt regard antiquity as ſomewhat unjuſt in

its distribution of honour, when it made gods of all the inventors of useful arts, such as CERES, BACCHUS, ÆSCULAPIUS; and dignified legislators, such as ROMULUS and THESEUS, only with the appellation of demigods and heroes.

As much as legislators and founders of states ought to be honoured and respected among men, as much ought the founders of sects and factions to be detested and hated; because the influence of faction is directly contrary to that of laws. Factions subvert government, render laws impotent, and beget the fiercest animosities among men of the same nation, who ought to give mutual assistance and protection to each other. And what should render the founders of parties more odious is, the difficulty of extirpating these parties, when once they have taken rise in any state. They naturally propagate themselves for many centuries, and seldom end but by the total dissolution of that government, in which they are planted. They are, besides, seeds which grow most plentifully in the richest soils; and though despotic governments be not entirely free from them, it must be confessed, that they rise more easily, and propagate themselves faster in free governments, where they always infect the legislature itself, which alone could be able, by the steady application of rewards and punishments, to eradicate them.

Factions or parties may be divided into PERSONAL and REAL; that is, into factions founded on personal friendship or animosity among those who compose the factions, and into those founded on some real difference of sentiment or interest. The reason of this distinction is obvious, tho' I must aknowledge, that parties are seldom found pure and unmixed, either of the one kind or the other. 'Tis not often seen, that a government divides into factions, where there is no difference in the views of the

the conſtituent members, either real or apparent, trivial or material: And in thoſe factions, which are founded on the moſt real and moſt material difference, there is always obſerved to be a great deal of perſonal animoſity or affection. But notwithſtanding this mixture, a party may be denominated either perſonal or real, according to that principle which is predominant, and is found to have the greateſt influence.

Perſonal factions ariſe moſt eaſily in ſmall republics. Every domeſtic quarrel becomes an affair of ſtate. Love, vanity, emulation, any paſſion begets public diviſion, as well as ambition and reſentment. The NERI and BIANCHI of FLORENCE, the FREGOSI and ADORNI of GENOA, the COLONESI and ORSINI of modern ROME, were parties of this kind.

Men have ſuch a propenſity to divide into perſonal factions, that the ſmalleſt appearance of real difference will produce them. What can be imagined more trivial than the difference between one colour of livery and another in horſe-races? Yet this difference begot two moſt inveterate factions in the GREEK empire, the PRASINI and VENETI, who never ſuſpended their animoſities, till they ruined that unhappy government.

We find in the ROMAN hiſtory a very remarkable faction between two tribes, the POLLIA and PAPIRIA, which continued for the ſpace of near three hundred years, and diſcovered itſelf in their ſuffrages at every election of magiſtrates *. This faction was the more remarkable,

* As this fact has not been much obſerved by antiquaries or politicians, I ſhall deliver it in the words of the ROMAN hiſtorian. *Populus* TUSCULANUS *cum conjugibus ac liberis* ROMAM *venit: Ea multitudo, veſte mutata, & ſpecie rerum tribus circuit, genibus ſe omnium advolvens. Plus itaque miſericordia ad pœnæ veniam impetrandam, quam cauſa ad crimen purgandum valuit. Tribus omnes præter* POLLIAM, *antiquarunt legem.* POLLIÆ *ſententia fuit, puberes verberatos necari, liberos conjugeſque ſub corona lege belli venire: Memoriamque*

markable, that it could continue for ſo long a tract of time; even though it did not ſpread itſelf, nor draw any of the other tribes into a ſhare of the quarrel. If mankind had not a ſtrong propenſity to ſuch diviſions, the indifference of the reſt of the community muſt have ſuppreſſed this fooliſh animoſity, that had not any aliment of new benefits and injuries, of general ſympathy and antipathy, which never fail to take place, when the whole ſtate is rent into two equal factions.

Nothing is more uſual than to ſee parties, which have begun upon a real difference, continue even after that difference is loſt. When men are once inliſted on oppoſite ſides, they contract an affection to the perſons with whom they are united, and an animoſity againſt their antagoniſts: And theſe paſſions they often tranſmit to their poſterity. The real difference between GUELF and GHIBBELLINE was long loſt in ITALY, before theſe factions were extinguiſhed. The GUELFS adhered to the pope, the GHIBBELLINES to the emperor; and yet the family of SFORSA, who were in alliance with the emperor, though they were GUELFS, being expelled MILAN by the king * of FRANCE, aſſiſted by JACOMO TRIVULZIO and the GHIBBELLINES, the pope concurred with the latter, and they formed leagues with the pope againſt the emperor.

The civil wars which aroſe ſome few years ago in MOROCCO, betwixt the *blacks* and *whites*, merely on account of their complexion, are founded on a very pleaſant difference. We laugh at them; but I believe, were things

ejus iræ TUSCULANIS *in pœnæ tam atrocis auctores manſiſſe ad patris ætatem conſtat; nec quemquam fere ex* POLLIA *tribu candidatum* PAPIRAM *ferre ſolitam*, T. LIVII, lib. 8. The CASTELANI and NICOLLOTI are two mobbiſh factions in VENICE, who frequently box together, and then lay aſide their quarrels preſently.

* LEWIS XII.

rightly examined, we afford much more occaſion of ridicule to the MOORS. For, what are all the wars of religion, which have prevailed in this polite and knowing part of the world? They are certainly more abſurd than the MOORISH civil wars. The difference of complexion is a ſenſible and a real difference: But the difference about an article of faith, which is utterly abſurd and unintelligible, is not a difference of ſentiments, but only a difference of a few phraſes and expreſſions, which one party accepts of, without underſtanding them; and the other refuſes in the ſame manner. Beſides, I do not find, that the *whites* in MOROCCO ever impoſed on the *blacks* any neceſſity of altering their complexion, or threatened them with inquiſitions and penal laws in caſe of obſtinacy: nor have the *blacks* been more unreaſonable in this particular. But is a man's opinion, where he is able to form a real opinion, more at his diſpoſal than his complexion? And can one be induced by force or fear to do more than paint and diſguiſe in the one caſe as well as in the other?

Real factions may be divided into factions from *intereſt*, from *principle*, and from *affection*. Of all factions, thoſe from intereſt are the moſt reaſonable, and the moſt excuſable. Where two orders of men, ſuch as the nobles and people, have a diſtinct authority in a government, which is not very accurately balanced and modelled, they naturally follow a diſtinct intereſt; nor can we reaſonably expect a different conduct, conſidering that degree of ſelfiſhneſs, which is implanted in human nature. It requires very great ſkill in a legiſlator to prevent ſuch factions; and many philoſophers are of opinion, that this ſecret, like the *grand elixir*, or *perpetual motion*, may amuſe men in theory, but can never poſſibly be reduced to practice. In deſpotic governments, indeed, factions often do not appear; but they are nevertheleſs real; or rather,

they are more real and more pernicious, upon that very account. The diſtinct orders of men, nobles and people, ſoldiers and merchants, have all a diſtinct intereſt; but the more powerful oppreſſes the weaker with impunity, and without reſiſtance; which begets a ſeeming tranquillity in ſuch governments.

There has been an attempt to divide the *landed* and *trading* intereſt of *England*; but without ſucceſs. The intereſt of theſe two bodies is not really diſtinct, and never will be ſo, till our public debts increaſe to ſuch a degree, as to become altogether oppreſſive and intolerable.

Parties from *principles*, eſpecially abſtract ſpeculative principles, are known only to modern times, and are, perhaps, the moſt extraordinary and unaccountable *phænomenon*, which has ever yet appeared in human affairs. Where different principles beget a contrariety of conduct, which is the caſe with all different political principles, the matter may be more eaſily explained. A man, who eſteems the true right of government to lie in one man, or one family, cannot eaſily agree with his fellow citizen, who thinks that another man or family is poſſeſſed of this right. Each naturally wiſhes that right may take place, according to his own notions of it. But where the difference of principles is attended with no contrariety of action, but each may follow his own way, without interfering with his neighbour, as happens in all religious controverſies; what madneſs, what fury can beget ſuch unhappy and ſuch fatal diviſions?

Two men, travelling on the highway, the one eaſt, the other weſt, can eaſily paſs each other, if the way be broad enough: But two men, reaſoning upon oppoſite principles of religion, cannot ſo eaſily paſs, without ſhocking; though one ſhould think, that the way were alſo,

alſo, in that caſe, ſufficiently broad, and that each might proceed, without interruption, in his own courſe. But ſuch is the nature of the human mind, that it always takes hold of every mind that approaches it; and as it is wonderfully fortified and corroborated by an unanimity of ſentiments, ſo is it ſhocked and diſturbed by any contrariety. Hence the eagerneſs, which moſt people diſcover in a diſpute; and hence their impatience of oppoſition, even in the moſt ſpeculative and indifferent opinions.

This principle, however frivolous it may appear, ſeems to have been the origin of all religious wars and diviſions. But as this principle is univerſal in human nature, its effects would not have been confined to one age, and to one ſect of religion, did it not there concur with other more accidental cauſes, which raiſe it to ſuch a height, as to produce the higheſt miſery and devaſtation. Moſt religions of the ancient world aroſe in the unknown ages of government, when men were as yet barbarous and uninſtructed, and the prince, as well as peaſant, was diſpoſed to receive, with implicit faith, every pious tale or fiction which was offered him. The magiſtrate embraced the religion of the people, and entering cordially into the care of ſacred matters, naturally acquired an authority in them, and united the eccleſiaſtical with the civil power. But the *Chriſtian* religion ariſing, while principles directly oppoſite to it were firmly eſtabliſhed in the polite part of the world, who deſpiſed the nation that firſt broached this novelty; no wonder, that in ſuch circumſtances, it was but little countenanced by the civil magiſtrate, and that the prieſthood were allowed to engroſs all the authority in the new ſect. So bad a uſe did they make of this power, even in thoſe early times, that the perſecutions of Chriſtianity may, perhaps,

perhaps, *in part* *, be aſcribed to the violence inſtilled by them into their followers. And the ſame principles of prieſtly government continuing, after Chriſtianity became the eſtabliſhed religion, they have engendered a ſpirit of perſecution, which has ever ſince been the poiſon of human ſociety, and the ſource of the moſt inveterate factions in every government. Such factions, therefore, on the part of the people, may juſtly be eſteemed factions of *principle*: but, on the part of the prieſts, who are the prime movers, they are really factions of *intereſt*.

There is another cauſe (beſide the authority of the prieſts, and the ſeparation of the eccleſiaſtical and civil powers) which has contributed to render CHRISTENDOM the ſcene of religious wars and diviſions. Religions, that ariſe in ages totally ignorant and barbarous, conſiſt moſtly of traditional tales and fictions, which may be very different in every ſect, without being contrary to each other; and even when they are contrary, every one adheres to the tradition of his own ſect, without much

* I ſay, *in part*; For 'tis a vulgar error to imagine, that the ancients were as great friends to toleration as the ENGLISH or DUTCH are at preſent. The laws againſt external ſuperſtition, amongſt the ROMANS, were as ancient as the time of the twelve tables; and the JEWS as well as CHRISTIANS were ſometimes puniſhed by them; tho', in general, theſe laws were not rigorouſly executed. Immediately after the conqueſt of GAUL, they forbad all but the natives to be initiated into the religion of the DRUIDS; and this was a kind of perſecution. In about a century after this conqueſt, the emperor, CLAUDIUS, quite aboliſhed that ſuperſtition by penal laws; which would have been a very grievous perſecution, if the imitation of the ROMAN manners had not, before-hand, weaned the GAULS from their ancient prejudices. SUETONIUS *in vita* CLAUDII. PLINY aſcribes the abolition of the Druid ſuperſtitions to TIBERIUS, probably becauſe that emperor had taken ſome ſteps towards reſtraining them, (lib. 30. cap. 1.) This is an inſtance of the uſual caution and moderation of the ROMANS in ſuch caſes; and very different from their violent and ſanguinary method of treating the *Chriſtians*. Hence we may entertain a ſuſpicion, that thoſe furious perſecutions of *Chriſtianity* were, in ſome meaſure, owing to the imprudent zeal and bigotry of the firſt propagators of that ſect; and Eccleſiaſtical hiſtory affords us many reaſons to confirm this ſuſpicion.

reaſoning

reaſoning or diſputation. But as philoſophy was widely ſpread over the world, at the time when Chriſtianity aroſe, the teachers of the new ſect were obliged to form a ſyſtem of ſpeculative opinions; to divide, with ſome accuracy, their articles of faith; and to explain, comment, confute, and confirm with all the ſubtilty of argument and ſcience. From hence naturally aroſe keenneſs in diſpute, when the chriſtian religion came to be ſplit into new diviſions and hereſies: And this keenneſs aſſiſted the prieſts in their policy, of begetting a mutual hatred and antipathy among their deluded followers. Sects of philoſophy in the ancient world, were more zealous than parties of religion; but in modern times, parties of religion are more furious and enraged than the moſt cruel factions that ever aroſe from intereſt and ambition.

I have mentioned parties from *affection* as a kind of *real* parties, beſide thoſe from *intereſt* and *principle*. By parties from affection, I underſtand thoſe which are founded on the different affections of men towards particular families and perſons, whom they deſire to rule over them. Theſe parties are often very violent; tho', I muſt own, it is ſomewhat unaccountable, that men ſhould attach themſelves ſo ſtrongly to perſons, with whom they are no way acquainted, whom perhaps they never ſaw, and from whom they never received, nor can ever hope for any favour. Yet this we find often to be the caſe, and even with men, who, on other occaſions, diſcover no great generoſity of ſpirit, nor are found to be eaſily tranſported by friendſhip beyond their own intereſt. We are apt, I know not how, to think the relation between us and our ſovereign very cloſe and intimate. The ſplendor of majeſty and power beſtows an importance on the fortunes even of a ſingle perſon. And when a man's good-nature gives him not this imaginary intereſt, his ill-nature will, from ſpite and oppoſition to perſons whoſe ſentiments are different from his own.

ESSAY

ESSAY VIII.

Of the PARTIES of GREAT BRITAIN.

WERE the BRITISH government propoſed as a ſubject of ſpeculation to a ſtudious man, he would immediately perceive in it a ſource of diviſion and party, which it would be almoſt impoſſible for it, under any adminiſtration, to avoid. The juſt balance between the republican and monarchical part of our conſtitution is really, in itſelf, ſo extremely delicate and uncertain, that when joined to mens paſſions and prejudices, 'tis impoſſible but different opinions muſt ariſe concerning it, even among perſons of the beſt underſtanding. Thoſe of mild tempers, who love peace and order, and deteſt ſedition and civil wars, will always entertain more favourable ſentiments of monarchy, than men of bold and generous ſpirits, who are paſſionate lovers of liberty, and think no evil comparable to ſubjection and ſlavery. And though all reaſonable men agree in general to preſerve our mixed government; yet when they come to particulars, ſome will incline to truſt larger powers to the crown, to beſtow on it more influence, and to guard againſt its encroachments with leſs caution, than others who are terrified at the moſt diſtant approaches of tyranny and deſpotic power. Thus are there parties of PRINCIPLE involved in the very nature of our conſtitution, which may properly

properly enough be denominated those of † COURT and COUNTRY. The strength and violence of each of these parties will much depend upon the particular administration. An administration may be so bad, as to throw a great majority into the opposition; as a good administration will reconcile to the court many of the most passionate lovers of liberty. But however the nation may fluctuate between them, the parties themselves will always subsist so long as we are governed by a limited monarchy.

But, besides this difference of *Principle*, those parties are very much fomented by a difference of INTEREST, without which they could scarce ever be dangerous or violent. The crown will naturally bestow all its trust and power upon those, whose principles, real or pretended, are most favourable to monarchical government; and this temptation will naturally engage them to go greater lengths than their principles would otherwise carry them. Their antagonists, who are disappointed in their ambitious aims, throw themselves into the party whose principles incline them to be most jealous of royal power, and naturally carry those principles to a greater length than sound politics will justify. Thus the *Court* and *Country* parties, which are the genuine offspring of the BRITISH government, are a kind of mixt parties, and are influenced both by principle and by interest.

† These words have become of general use, and therefore I shall employ them, without intending to express by them an universal blame of the one party, or approbation of the other. The court-party may, no doubt, on some occasions consult best the interest of the country, and the country-party oppose it. In like manner, the ROMAN parties were denominated *Optimates* and *Populares*; and CICERO, like a true party man, defines the *Optimates* to be such as, in all their public conduct, regulated themselves by the sentiments of the best and worthiest of the ROMANS: *Pro Sextio, cap.* 45. The term of *Country-party* may afford a favourable definition or etymology of the same kind: But it would be folly to draw any argument from that head, and I have no regard to it in employing these terms.

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The heads of the factions are commonly moſt governed by the latter motive; the inferior members of them by the former. I muſt be underſtood to mean this of perſons who have motives for taking party on any ſide. For, to tell the truth, the greateſt part are commonly men who aſſociate themſelves they know not why; from example, from paſſion, from idleneſs. But ſtill it is requiſite, that there be ſome ſource of diviſion, either in principle or intereſt; otherwiſe ſuch perſons would not find parties, to which they could aſſociate themſelves.

As to eccleſiaſtical parties; we may obſerve, that, in all ages of the world, prieſts have been enemies to liberty *, and 'tis certain, that this ſteady conduct of theirs muſt have been founded on fixt reaſons of intereſt and ambition. Liberty of thinking, and of expreſſing our thoughts, is always fatal to prieſtly power, and to thoſe pious frauds, on which it is commonly founded; and, by an infallible connexion, which prevails among every ſpecies of liberty, this privilege can never be enjoyed, at leaſt, has never yet been enjoyed, but in a free government. Hence it muſt happen, in ſuch a government as that of BRITAIN, that the eſtabliſhed clergy, while things are in their natural ſituation, will always be of the *Court*-party; as, on the contrary, diſſenters of all kinds will be of the *Country*-party; ſince they can never hope for that toleration, which they ſtand in need of, but by means of our free government. All princes, who have aimed at deſpotic power, have known of what importance it was to gain the eſtabliſhed clergy: As the clergy, on their ſide, have ſhewn a great facility of enter-

* This propoſition is true, notwithſtanding, that in the early times of the ENGLISH government, the clergy were the great and principal oppoſers of the crown: But, at that time, their poſſeſſions were ſo immenſely great, that they compoſed a conſiderable part of the proprietors of ENGLAND, and in many conteſts were direct rivals of the crown.

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ing into the views of ſuch princes *. GUSTAVUS VAZA was, perhaps, the only ambitious monarch, that ever depreſſed the church, at the ſame time that he diſcouraged liberty. But the exorbitant power of the biſhops in SWEDEN, who, at that time, overtopped the crown itſelf, together with their attachment to a foreign family, was the reaſon of his embracing ſuch an unuſual ſyſtem of politics.

This obſervation concerning the propenſity of prieſts to deſpotic power, and to the government of a ſingle perſon, is not true with regard to one ſect only. The *Presbyterian* and *Calviniſtic* clergy in HOLLAND were always profeſſed friends to the family of ORANGE; as the *Arminians*, who were eſteemed heretics, were always of the LOUVESTEIN faction, and zealous for liberty. But if a prince has the choice of both, 'tis eaſy to ſee, that he will prefer the epiſcopal to the preſbyterian form of goverment, both becauſe of the greater affinity between monarchy and epiſcopacy, and becauſe of the facility which a prince finds, in ſuch a government, of ruling the clergy, by means of their eccleſiaſtical ſuperiors †.

If we conſider the firſt riſe of parties in ENGLAND, during the civil wars, we ſhall find, that it was exactly conformable to this general theory, and that the ſpecies of government gave birth to theſe parties, by a regular and infallible operation. The ENGLISH conſtitution, before that time, had lain in a kind of confuſion; yet ſo, as that the ſubjects poſſeſſed many noble privileges, which,

* Judæi ſibi ipſi reges impoſuere; qui mobilitate vulgi expulſi, reſumpta per arma dominatione; fugas civium, urbium everſiones, fratrum, conjugum, parentum neces, aliaque ſolita regibus auſi, ſuperſtitionem fovebant; quia honor ſacerdotii firmamentum potentiæ aſſumebatur. TACIT. *hiſt. lib.* 5.

† Populi imperium juxta libertatem: paucorum dominatio regiæ libidini propior eſt. TACIT. *Ann. lib.* 6.

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tho' not, perhaps, exactly bounded and ſecured by law, were univerſally deemed, from long poſſeſſion, to belong to them as their birth-right. An ambitious, or rather an ignorant, prince aroſe, who eſteemed all theſe privileges to be conceſſions of his predeceſſors, revocable at pleaſure; and, in proſecution of this principle, he openly acted in violation of liberty, during the courſe of ſeveral years. Neceſſity, at laſt, conſtrained him to call a parliament: the ſpirit of liberty aroſe and ſpread itſelf: The prince, being without any ſupport, was obliged to grant every thing required of him: And his enemies, jealous and implacable, ſet no bounds to their pretenſions. Here then began thoſe conteſts, in which it was no wonder, that men of that age were divided into different parties; ſince, even at this day, the impartial are at a loſs to decide concerning the juſtice of the quarrel. The pretenſions of the parliament, if yielded to, broke the balance of the conſtitution, by rendering the government almoſt entirely republican. If not yielded to, the nation were, perhaps, ſtill in danger of deſpotic power, from the ſettled principles and inveterate habits of the king, which had plainly appeared in every conceſſion that he had been conſtrained to make to his people. In this queſtion, ſo delicate and uncertain, men naturally fell to the ſide which was moſt conformable to their uſual principles; and thoſe, who were the moſt paſſionate favourers of monarchy, declared for the king, as the zealous friends of liberty ſided with the parliament. The hopes of ſucceſs being nearly equal on both ſides, *intereſt* had no general influence in this conteſt: So that ROUND-HEAD and CAVALIER were merely parties of principle; neither of which diſowned either monarchy or liberty; but the former party inclined moſt to the republican part of our government, and the latter to the monarchical. In this reſpect, they may be conſidered as court and country-party enflamed into a civil war, by an unhappy concurrence of circumſtances, and by the

turbulent ſpirit of the age. The commonwealth's men, and the partizans of deſpotic power, lay concealed in both parties, and formed but an inconſiderable part of them.

The clergy had concurred with the king's arbitrary deſigns, according to their uſual maxims in ſuch caſes: And, in return, were allowed to perſecute their adverſaries, whom they called heretics and ſchiſmatics. The eſtabliſhed clergy were epiſcopal; the non-conformiſts preſbyterian: So that all things concurred to throw the former, without reſerve, into the king's party; and the latter into that of the parliament. The *Cavaliers* being the court-party, and the *Round-heads* the country-party, the union was infallible between the former and the eſtabliſhed prelacy, and between the latter and preſbyterian non-conformiſts. This union is ſo natural, according to the general principles of politics, that it requires ſome very extraordinary ſituation of affairs to break it.

Every one knows the event of this quarrel; fatal to the king firſt, and to the parliament afterwards. After many confuſions and revolutions, the royal family was at laſt reſtored, and the government eſtabliſhed on the ſame footing as before. CHARLES II. was not made wiſer by the example of his father; but proſecuted the ſame meaſures, tho' at firſt, with more ſecrecy and caution. New parties aroſe, under the appellations of *Whig* and *Tory*, which have continued ever ſince to confound and diſtract our government. What the nature is of theſe parties, is, perhaps, one of the moſt difficult queſtions, which can be met with, and is a proof that hiſtory may contain problems, as uncertain as any, which are to be found in the moſt abſtract ſciences. We have ſeen the conduct of theſe two parties, during the courſe of ſeventy years, in a vaſt variety of circumſtances, poſſeſſed of power, and deprived of it, during peace, and during war:

Perſons,

Perſons, who profeſs themſelves of one ſide or other, we meet every hour, in company, in our pleaſures, in our ſerious occupations: We ourſelves are conſtrained, in a manner to take party; and living in a country of the higheſt liberty, every one may openly declare all his ſentiments and opinions: And yet we are at a loſs to tell the nature, pretenſions, and principles of the parties. The queſtion is, perhaps, in itſelf, ſomewhat difficult; but has been rendered more ſo, by the prejudice and violence of party.

When we compare the parties of WHIG and TORY, to thoſe of ROUND-HEAD and CAVALIER, the moſt obvious difference, which appears between them, conſiſts in the principles of *paſſive obedience*, and *indefeaſible right*, which were but little heard of among the CAVALIERS, but became the univerſal doctrine, and were eſteemed the true characteriſtic of a TORY. Were theſe principles puſhed into their moſt obvious conſequences, they imply a formal renunciation of all our liberties, and an avowal of abſolute monarchy; ſince nothing can be a greater abſurdity than a limited power, which muſt not be reſiſted, even when it exceeds its limitations. But as the moſt rational principles are often but a weak counterpoiſe to paſſion; 'tis no wonder that theſe abſurd principles, *ſufficient*, according to a celebrated author *, *to ſhock the common ſenſe of a* HOTTENTOT *or* SAMOIEDE, were found too weak for that effect. The TORIES, as men, were enemies to oppreſſion; and alſo as ENGLISHMEN, they were enemies to arbitrary power. Their zeal for liberty, was, perhaps, leſs fervent than that of their antagoniſts; but was ſufficient to make them forget all their general principles, when they ſaw themſelves openly threatened with a ſubverſion of the antient government.

* Diſſertation on parties, *Letter* 2d.

From these sentiments arose the *revolution*; an event of mighty consequence, and the firmest foundation of BRITISH liberty. The conduct of the TORIES, during that event, and after it, will afford us a true insight into the nature of that party.

In the *first* place, They appear to have had the sentiments of true BRITONS in their affections to liberty, and in their determined resolution not to sacrifice it to any abstract principles whatsoever, or to any imaginary rights of princes. This part of their character might justly have been doubted of before the *revolution*, from the obvious tendency of their avowed principles, and from their great compliances with a court, which made little secret of its arbitrary designs. The *revolution* shewed them to have been, in this respect, nothing but a genuine *court-party*, such as might be expected in a BRITISH government: That is, *Lovers of liberty, but greater lovers of monarchy*. It must, however, be confessed, that they carried their monarchical principles further, even in practice, but more so in theory, than was, in any degree, consistent with a limited government.

Secondly, Neither their principles nor affections concurred, entirely or heartily, with the settlement made at the *revolution*, or with that which has since taken place. This part of their character may seem contradictory to the former; since any other settlement, in those circumstances of the nation, must probably have been dangerous, if not fatal to liberty. But the heart of man is made to reconcile contradictions; and this contradiction is not greater than that betwixt *passive obedience*, and the *resistance* employed at the *revolution*. A TORY, therefore, since the *revolution*, may be defined in a few words, to be *a lover of monarchy, tho' without abandoning liberty; and a partizan of the family of* STUART. As a WHIG may be defined to be *lover of liberty, tho' without renouncing monarchy*;

monarchy; *and a friend to the ſettlement in the* PROTESTANT *line* *.

Theſe different views, with regard to the ſettlement of the crown, were accidental, but natural additions to the

* The author above cited has aſſerted, that the REAL diſtinction betwixt WHIG and TORY was loſt at the *revolution*, and that ever ſince they have continued to be mere *perſonal* parties, like the GUELFS and GIBBELINES, after the emperors had loſt all authority in ITALY. Such an opinion, were it received, would turn our whole hiſtory into an ænigma.

I ſhall firſt mention, as a proof of a real diſtinction between theſe parties, what every one may have obſerved or heard concerning the conduct and converſation of all his friends and acquaintance on both ſides. Have not the TORIES always borne an avowed affection to the family of STUART, and have not their adverſaries always oppoſed with vigour the ſucceſſion of that family?

The TORY principles are confeſſedly the moſt favourable to monarchy. Yet the Tories have almoſt always oppoſed the court theſe fifty years; nor were they cordial friends to King WILLIAM, even when employed by him. Their quarrel, therefore, cannot be ſuppoſed to have lain with the throne, but with the perſon who ſat on it.

They concurred heartily with the court during the four laſt years of Queen ANNE. But is any one at a loſs to find the reaſon?

The ſucceſſion of the crown in the BRITISH government is a point of too great conſequence to be abſolutely indifferent to perſons who concern themſelves, in any degree, about the fortune of the public; much leſs can it be ſuppoſed that the TORY party, who never valued themſelves upon moderation, could maintain a *ſtoical* indifference in a point of ſuch importance. Were they, therefore, zealous for the houſe of HANOVER? Or was there any thing that kept an oppoſite zeal from openly appearing, if it did not openly appear, but prudence, and a ſenſe of decency?

'Tis monſtrous to ſee an eſtabliſhed epiſcopal clergy in declared oppoſition to the court, and a non-conformiſt preſbyterian clergy in conjunction with it. What could have produced ſuch an unnatural conduct in both? Nothing, but that the former eſpouſed monarchical principles too high for the preſent ſettlement, which is founded on principles of liberty: And the latter, being afraid of the prevalence of thoſe high principles, adhered to that party from whom they had reaſon to expect liberty and toleration.

The different conduct of the two parties, with regard to foreign politics, is alſo a proof to the ſame purpoſe. HOLLAND has always been moſt favoured by one, and FRANCE by the other. In ſhort, the proofs of this kind ſeem ſo palpable and evident, that 'tis almoſt needleſs to collect them.

principles of the *court* and *country* parties, which are the genuine parties of the BRITISH government. A paſſionate lover of monarchy is apt to be diſpleaſed at any change of the ſucceſſion; as ſavouring too much of a commonwealth: A paſſionate lover of liberty is apt to think that every part of the government ought to be ſubordinate to the intereſts of liberty. 'Tis however remarkable, that tho' the principles of WHIG and TORY were both of them of a compound nature; yet the ingredients, which predominated in both, were not correſpondent to each other. A TORY loved monarchy, and bore an affection to the family of STUART; but the latter affection was the predominant inclination of the party. A WHIG loved liberty, and was a friend to the ſettlement in the PROTESTANT line; but the love of liberty was profeſſedly his predominant inclination. The TORIES have frequently acted as republicans, where either policy or revenge has engaged them to that conduct; and there was no one of that party, who, upon the ſuppoſition, that he was to be diſappointed in his views with regard to the ſucceſſion, would not have deſired to impoſe the ſtricteſt limitations on the crown, and to bring our form of government as near republican as poſſible, in order to depreſs the family, which, according to his apprehenſion, ſucceeded without any juſt title. The WHIGS, 'tis true, have alſo taken ſteps dangerous to liberty, under colour of ſecuring the ſucceſſion and ſettlement of the crown, according to their views: But as the body of the party had no paſſion for that ſucceſſion, otherwiſe than as the means of ſecuring liberty, they have been betrayed into theſe ſteps by ignorance, or frailty, or the intereſts of their leaders. The ſucceſſion of the crown was, therefore, the chief point with the TORIES; the ſecurity of our liberties with the WHIGS. Nor is this ſeeming irregularity at all difficult to be accounted for, by our preſent theory. *Court* and *country* parties are the true parents

parents of TORY and WHIG. But 'tis almoſt impoſſible, that the attachment of the *court* party to monarchy ſhould not degenerate into an attachment to the monarch; there being ſo cloſe a connexion between them, and the latter being ſo much the more natural object. How eaſily does the worſhip of the divinity degenerate into a worſhip of the idol? The connexion is not ſo great between liberty, the divinity of the old *country* party or WHIGS, and any monarch or royal family; nor is it ſo reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that in that party, the worſhip can be ſo eaſily transferred from the one to the other. Tho' even that would be no great miracle.

'Tis difficult to penetrate into the thoughts and ſentiments of any particular man; but 'tis almoſt impoſſible to diſtinguiſh thoſe of a whole party, where it often happens, that no two perſons agree preciſely in the ſame maxims of conduct. Yet I will venture to affirm, that it was not ſo much PRINCIPLE, or an opinion of indefeaſible right, which attached the TORIES to the ancient royal family, as AFFECTION, or a certain love and eſteem for their perſons. The ſame cauſe divided ENGLAND formerly between the houſes of YORK and LANCASTER, and SCOTLAND between the families of BRUCE and BALLIOL; in an age, when political diſputes were but little in faſhion, and when political *principles* muſt of courſe have had but little influence on mankind. The doctrine of paſſive obedience is ſo abſurd in itſelf, and ſo oppoſite to our liberties, that it ſeems to have been chiefly left to pulpit-declaimers, and to their deluded followers among the vulgar. Men of better ſenſe were guided by *affection*; and as to the leaders of this party, 'tis probable, that *intereſt* was their chief motive, and that they acted more contrary to their private ſentiments, than the leaders of of the oppoſite party. Tho' 'tis almoſt impoſſible to maintain with zeal the right of any perſon or family,

without acquiring a good-will to them, and changing the *principle* into *affection*; yet this is leſs natural to people of an elevated ſtation and liberal education, who have had full opportunity of obſerving the weakneſs, folly, and arrogance of monarchs, and have found them to be nothing ſuperior, if not rather inferior to the reſt of mankind. The *intereſt*, therefore, of being heads of a party does often, with ſuch people, ſupply the place both of *principle* and *affection*.

Some, who will not venture to aſſert, that the *real* difference between WHIG and TORY was loſt at the *revolution*, ſeem inclined to think, that the difference is now aboliſhed, and that affairs are ſo far returned to their natural ſtate, that there are at preſent no other parties amongſt us but *court* and *country*; that is, men, who by intereſt or principle, are attached either to monarchy or to liberty. It muſt, indeed, be confeſt, that the TORY party ſeem, of late, to have decayed much in their numbers; ſtill more in their zeal; and I may venture to ſay, ſtill more in their credit and authority. There are few men of knowledge or learning, at leaſt, few philoſophers, ſince Mr. LOCKE has wrote, who would not be aſhamed to be thought of that party; and in almoſt all companies the name of OLD WHIG is mentioned as an unconteſtable appellation of honour and dignity. Accordingly, the enemies of the miniſtry, as a reproach, call the courtiers the true TORIES; and as an honour, denominate the gentlemen in the *oppoſition* the true WHIGS. The TORIES have been ſo long obliged to talk in the republican ſtile, that they ſeem to have made converts of themſelves by their hypocriſy, and to have embraced the ſentiments, as well as language of their adverſaries. There are, however, very conſiderable remains of that party in ENGLAND, with all their old prejudices; and a proof that *court* and *country* are not our only parties, is, that

that almoſt all the diſſenters ſide with the court, and the lower clergy, at leaſt, of the church of ENGLAND, with the oppoſition. This may convince us, that ſome biaſs ſtill hangs upon our conſtitution, ſome extrinſic weight, which turns it from its natural courſe, and cauſes a confuſion in our parties.

I ſhall conclude this ſubject with obſerving that we never had any TORIES in SCOTLAND, according to the proper ſignification of the word, and that the diviſion of parties in this country was really into WHIGS and JACOBITES. A JACOBITE ſeems to be a TORY, who has no regard to the conſtitution, but is either a zealous partizan of abſolute monarchy, or at leaſt willing to ſacrifice our liberties to the obtaining the ſucceſſion in that family to which he is attached. The reaſon of the difference between ENGLAND and SCOTLAND, I take to be this: Political and religious diviſions in the latter country, have been, ſince the *revolution*, regularly correſpondent to each other. The PRESBYTERIANS were all WHIGS without exception: Thoſe who favoured *epiſcopacy*, of the oppoſite party. And as the clergy of the latter ſect were turned out of the churches at the *revolution*, they had no motive for making any compliances with the government in their oaths, or their forms of prayers, but openly avowed the higheſt principles of their party; which is the cauſe why their followers have been more violent than their brethren of the TORY party in ENGLAND *.

* Some of the opinions, delivered in theſe Eſſays, with regard to the public tranſactions in the laſt century, the Author, on more accurate examination, found reaſon to retract in his *Hiſtory of* GREAT BRITAIN. And as he would not enſlave himſelf to the ſyſtems of either party, neither would he fetter his judgment by his own preconceived opinions and principles; nor is he aſhamed to acknowledge his miſtakes.

ESSAY

ESSAY IX.

Of SUPERSTITION and ENTHUSIASM.

THAT the corruption of the beſt things produces the worſt, is grown into a maxim, and is commonly proved, among other inſtances, by the pernicious effects of *ſuperſtition* and *enthuſiaſm*, the corruptions of true religion.

Theſe two ſpecies of falſe religion, though both pernicious, are yet of a very different, and even of a contrary nature. The mind of man is ſubject to certain unaccountable terrors and apprehenſions, proceeding either from the unhappy ſituation of private or public affairs, from ill health, from a gloomy and melancholy diſpoſition, or from the concurrence of all theſe circumſtances. In ſuch a ſtate of mind, infinite unknown evils are dreaded from unknown agents; and where real objects of terror are wanting, the ſoul, active to its own prejudice, and foſtering its predominant inclination, finds imaginary ones, to whoſe power and malevolence it ſets no limits. As theſe enemies are entirely inviſible and unknown, the methods taken to appeaſe them are equally unaccountable, and conſiſt in ceremonies, obſervances, mortifications, ſacrifices, preſents, or in any practice, however abſurd or frivolous, which either folly or knavery recommends to a blind and terrified credulity. Weakneſs, fear, melancholy, together with ignorance, are, therefore, the true ſources of SUPERSTITION.

But

But the mind of man is alſo ſubject to an unaccountable elevation and preſumption, proceeding from proſperous ſucceſs, from luxuriant health, from ſtrong ſpirits, or from a bold and confident diſpoſition. In ſuch a ſtate of mind, the imagination ſwells with great, but confuſed conceptions, to which no ſublunary beauties or enjoyments can correſpond. Every thing mortal and periſhable vaniſhes as unworthy of attention. And a full range is given to the fancy in the inviſible regions or world of ſpirits, where the ſoul is at liberty to indulge itſelf in every imagination, which may beſt ſuit its preſent taſte and diſpoſition. Hence ariſe raptures, tranſports, and ſurpriſing flights of fancy; and confidence and preſumption ſtill increaſing, theſe raptures, being altogether unaccountable, and ſeeming quite beyond the reach of our ordinary faculties, are attributed to the immediate inſpiration of that Divine Being, who is the object of devotion. In a little time, the inſpired perſon comes to regard himſelf as the chief favourite of the Divinity; and when this frenzy once takes place, which is the ſummit of enthuſiaſm, every whimſy is conſecrated: Human reaſon, and even morality are rejected as fallacious guides: And the fanatic madman delivers himſelf over, blindly, without reſerve, to the ſuppoſed illapſes of the ſpirit, and to inſpirations from above. Hope, pride, preſumption, a warm imagination, together with ignorance, are, therefore, the true ſources of ENTHUSIASM.

Theſe two ſpecies of falſe religion might afford occaſion to many ſpeculations; but I ſhall confine myſelf, at preſent, to a few reflections concerning their different influence on government and ſociety.

My firſt reflection is, *That ſuperſtition is favourable to prieſtly power, and enthuſiaſm as much or rather more contrary to it, than ſound reaſon and philoſophy.* As ſuperſtition is founded on fear, ſorrow, and a depreſſion of ſpirits, it repreſents

preſents the man to himſelf in ſuch deſpicable colours, that he appears unworthy in his own eyes, of approaching the divine preſence, and naturally has recourſe to any other perſon, whoſe ſanctity of life, or, perhaps, impudence and cunning, have made him be ſuppoſed more favoured by the Divinity. To him the ſuperſtitious entruſt their devotions: To his care they recommend their prayers, petitions, and ſacrifices: and by his means, they hope to render their addreſſes acceptable to their incenſed Deity. Hence the origin of PRIESTS*, who may juſtly be regarded as one of the groſſeſt inventions of a timorous and abject ſuperſtition, which, ever diffident of itſelf, dares not offer up its own devotions, but ignorantly thinks to recommend itſelf to the Divinity, by the mediation of his ſuppoſed friends and ſervants. As ſuperſtition is a conſiderable ingredient in almoſt all religions, even the moſt fanatical; there being nothing but philoſophy able to conquer entirely theſe unaccountable terrors; hence it proceeds, that in almoſt every ſect of religion there are prieſts to be found: But the ſtronger mixture there is of ſuperſtition, the higher is the authority of the prieſthood. Modern Judaiſm and Popery, (eſpecially the latter) being the moſt unphiloſophical and abſurd ſuperſtitions which have yet been known in the world, are the moſt enſlaved by their prieſts. As the church of ENGLAND may juſtly be ſaid to retain ſome mixture of Popiſh ſuperſtition, it partakes alſo, in its original conſtitution, of a propenſity to prieſtly power and dominion; particularly in the reſpect it exacts to the ſacerdotal character. And tho', according to the ſen-

* By *Prieſts* I here mean only the pretenders to power and dominion, and to a ſuperior ſanctity of character, diſtinct from virtue and good morals. Theſe are very different from *clergymen*, who are ſet apart, *by the laws*, to the care of ſacred matters, and to the conducting our public devotions with greater decency and order. There is no rank of men more to be reſpected than the latter.

timents of that church, the prayers of the prieſt muſt be accompanied with thoſe of the laity; yet is he the mouth of the congregation, his perſon is ſacred, and without his preſence few would think their public devotions, or the ſacraments, and other rites, acceptable to the Divinity.

On the other hand, it may be obſerved, that all enthuſiaſts have been free from the yoke of eccleſiaſtics, and have expreſſed great independence in their devotion; with a contempt of forms, ceremonies and traditions. The *quakers* are the moſt egregious, tho' at the ſame time, the moſt innocent enthuſiaſts that have been yet known; and are, perhaps, the only ſect, who have never admitted prieſts amongſt them. The *independents*, of all the ENGLISH ſectaries, approach neareſt to the *quakers* in fanaticiſm, and in their freedom from prieſtly bondage. The *preſbyterians* follow after, at an equal diſtance in both theſe particulars. In ſhort, this obſervation is founded in the moſt certain experience; and will alſo appear to be founded in reaſon, if we conſider, that as enthuſiaſm ariſes from a preſumptuous pride and confidence, it thinks itſelf ſufficiently qualified to *approach* the Divinity, without any human mediator. Its rapturous devotions are ſo fervent, that it even imagines itſelf *actually* to *approach* him by the way of contemplation and inward converſe; which makes it neglect all thoſe outward ceremonies and obſervances, to which the aſſiſtance of the prieſts appears ſo requiſite in the eyes of their ſuperſtitious votaries. The fanatic conſecrates himſelf, and beſtows on his own perſon a ſacred character, much ſuperior to what forms and ceremonious inſtitutions can confer on any other.

My *ſecond* reflection with regard to theſe ſpecies of falſe religion is, *that religions, which partake of enthuſiaſm are, in their firſt riſe, much more furious and violent than thoſe*

thoſe which partake of ſuperſtition; but in a little time become much more gentle and moderate. The violence of this ſpecies of religion, when excited by novelty, and animated by oppoſition, appears from numberleſs inſtances; of the *anabaptiſts* in GERMANY, the *camiſars* in FRANCE, the *levellers* and other fanatics in ENGLAND, and the *covenanters* in SCOTLAND. Enthuſiaſm being founded on ſtrong ſpirits, and a preſumptuous boldneſs of character, it naturally begets the moſt extreme reſolutions; eſpecially after it riſes to that height as to inſpire the deluded fanatic with the opinion of divine illuminations, and with a contempt for the common rules of reaſon, morality and prudence.

'Tis thus enthuſiaſm produces the moſt cruel deſolations in human ſociety; but its fury is like that of thunder and tempeſt, which exhauſt themſelves in a little time, and leave the air more calm and ſerene than before. When the firſt fire of enthuſiaſm is ſpent, men naturally, in all fanatical ſects, ſink into the greateſt remiſſneſs and coolneſs in ſacred matters; there being no body of men amongſt them, endowed with ſufficient authority, whoſe intereſt is concerned to ſupport the religious ſpirit: No rites, no ceremonies, no holy obſervances, which may enter into the common train of life, and preſerve the ſacred principles from oblivion. Superſtition, on the contrary, ſteals in gradually and inſenſibly; renders men tame and ſubmiſſive; is acceptable to the magiſtrate, and ſeems inoffenſive to the people: Till at laſt the prieſt, having firmly eſtabliſhed his authority, becomes the tyrant and diſturber of human ſociety, by his endleſs contentions, perſecutions, and religious wars. How ſmoothly did the ROMISH church advance in their acquiſition of power? But into what diſmal convulſions did they throw all EUROPE, in order to maintain it? On the other hand, our ſectaries, who were

formerly ſuch dangerous bigots, are now become very free reaſoners; and the *quakers* ſeem to approach nearly the only regular body of *deiſts* in the univerſe, the *literati*, or the diſciples of CONFUCIUS in CHINA *.

My *third* obſervation on this head is, *that ſuperſtition is an enemy to civil liberty, and enthuſiaſm a friend to it.* As ſuperſtition groans under the dominion of the prieſts, and enthuſiaſm is deſtructive of all eccleſiaſtical power, this ſufficiently accounts for the preſent obſervation. Not to mention, that enthuſiaſm being the infirmity of bold and ambitious tempers, is naturally accompanied with a ſpirit of liberty; as ſuperſtition, on the contrary, renders men tame and abject, and fits them for ſlavery. We learn from the ENGLISH hiſtory, that, during the civil wars, the *independents* and *deiſts*, tho' the moſt oppoſite in their religious principles; yet were united in their political ones, and were alike paſſionate for a commonwealth. And ſince the origin of *whig* and *tory*, the leaders of the *whigs* have either been *deiſts* or profeſt *latitudinarians* in their principles; that is, friends to toleration, and indifferent to any particular ſect of *chriſtians:* While the ſectaries, who have all a ſtrong tincture of enthuſiaſm, have always, without exception, concurred with that party, in the defence of civil liberty. The reſemblance in their ſuperſtitions long united the high-church *tories*, and the *Roman catholics*, in the ſupport of prerogative and kingly power; though experience of the tolerating ſpirit of the *whigs* ſeems of late to have reconciled the *catholics* to that party.

The *moliniſts* and *janſeniſts* in FRANCE have a thouſand unintelligible diſputes, which are not worthy the reflection of a man of ſenſe: But what principally diſtinguiſhes theſe two ſects, and alone merits attention, is the different

* The CHINESE Literati have no prieſts or eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhment.

ſpirit

ſpirit of their religion. The *moliniſts*, conducted by the *jeſuites*, are great friends to ſuperſtition, rigid obſervers of external forms and ceremonies, and devoted to the authority of the prieſts, and to tradition. The *janſeniſts* are enthuſiaſts, and zealous promoters of the paſſionate devotion, and of the inward life; little influenced by authority; and, in a word, but half catholics. The conſequences are exactly conformable to the foregoing reaſoning. The *jeſuites* are the tyrants of the people, and the ſlaves of the court: And the *janſeniſts* preſerve alive the ſmall ſparks of the love of liberty, which are to be found in the FRENCH nation.

ESSAY X.

Of AVARICE.

'TIS eaſy to obſerve, that comic writers exaggerate every character, and draw their fop, or coward with ſtronger features than are any where to be met with in nature. This moral kind of painting for the ſtage has been often compared to the painting for cupolas and cielings, where the colours are over-charged, and every part is drawn exceſſively large, and beyond nature. The figures ſeem monſtrous and diſproportioned, when ſeen too nigh; but become natural and regular, when ſet at a diſtance, and placed in that point of view, in which they are intended to be ſurveyed. For a like reaſon, when characters are exhibited in theatrical repreſentations, the want of reality removes, in a manner, the perſonages; and rendering them more cold and unentertaining, makes it neceſſary to compenſate, by the force of colouring, what they want in ſubſtance. Thus we find in common life, that when a man once allows himſelf to depart from truth in his narrations, he never can keep within the bounds of probability; but adds ſtill ſome new circumſtance to render his ſtories more marvellous, and to ſatisfy his imagination. Two men in buckram ſuits became eleven to Sir JOHN FALSTAFF before the end of his ſtory.

There is only one vice, which may be found in life with as ſtrong features, and as high a colouring as needs be employed by any ſatyriſt or comic poet; and that is AVARICE. Every day we meet with men of immenſe fortunes, without heirs, and on the very brink of the grave, who refuſe themſelves the moſt common neceſſaries of life, and go on heaping poſſeſſions on poſſeſſions, under all the real preſſures of the ſevereſt poverty. An old uſurer, ſays the ſtory, lying in his laſt agonies was preſented by the prieſt with the crucifix to worſhip. He opens his eyes a moment before he expires, conſiders the crucifix, and cries, *Theſe jewels are not true; I can only lend ten piſtoles upon ſuch a pledge.* This was probably the invention of ſome epigrammatiſt; and yet every one, from his own experience, may be able to recollect almoſt as ſtrong inſtances of perſeverance in avarice. 'Tis commonly reported of a famous miſer in this city, that finding himſelf near death, he ſent for ſome of the magiſtrates, and gave them a bill of an hundred pounds, payable after his deceaſe; which ſum he intended ſhould be diſpoſed of in charitable uſes; but ſcarce were they gone, when he orders them to be called back, and offers them ready money, if they would abate five pounds of the ſum. Another noted miſer in the north, intending to defraud his heirs, and leave his fortune to the building an hoſpital, protracted the drawing of his will from day to day; and 'tis thought, that if thoſe intereſted in it had not paid for the drawing it, he had died inteſtate. In ſhort, none of the moſt furious exceſſes of love and ambition are in any reſpect to be compared to the extremes of avarice.

The beſt excuſe that can be made for avarice is, that it generally prevails in old men, or in men of cold tempers, where all the other affections are extinct; and the mind being incapable of remaining without ſome paſſion or purſuit, at laſt finds out this monſtrouſly abſurd one, which

which ſuits the coldneſs and inactivity of its temper. At the ſame time, it ſeems very extraordinary, that ſo froſty, ſpiritleſs a paſſion ſhould be able to carry us farther than all the warmth of youth and pleaſure. But if we look more narrowly into the matter, we ſhall find, that this very circumſtance renders the explication of the caſe more eaſy. When the temper is warm and full of vigour, it naturally ſhoots out more ways than one, and produces inferior paſſions to counter-balance, in ſome degree, its predominant inclination. 'Tis impoſſible for a perſon of that temper, however bent on any purſuit, to be deprived of all ſenſe of ſhame, or all regard to the ſentiments of mankind. His friends muſt have ſome influence over him: And other conſiderations are apt to have their weight. All this ſerves to reſtrain him within ſome bounds. But 'tis no wonder that the avaritious man, being, from the coldneſs of his temper, without regard to reputation, to friendſhip, or to pleaſure, ſhould be carried ſo far by his prevailing inclination, and ſhould diſplay his paſſion in ſuch ſurpriſing inſtances.

Accordingly we find no vice ſo irreclaimable as avarice: And tho' there ſcarcely has been a moraliſt or philoſopher, from the beginning of the world to this day, who has not levelled a ſtroke at it, we hardly find a ſingle inſtance of any perſon's being cured of it. For this reaſon, I am more apt to approve of thoſe, who attack it with wit and humour, than of thoſe who treat it in a ſerious manner. There being ſo little hopes of doing good to the people infected with this vice, I would have the reſt of mankind, at leaſt, diverted by our manner of expoſing it: As indeed there is no kind of diverſion, of which they ſeem ſo willing to partake.

Among the fables of *Monſieur de la* MOTTE, there is one levelled againſt avarice, which ſeems to me more natural and eaſy, than moſt of the fables of that ingenious

author. A miſer, ſays he, being dead, and fairly interred, came to the banks of the STYX, deſiring to be ferried over along with the other ghoſts. CHARON demands his fare, and is ſurprized to ſee the miſer, rather than pay it, throw himſelf into the river, and ſwim over to the other ſide, notwithſtanding all the clamour and oppoſition that could be made to him. All hell was in an uproar; and each of the judges was meditating ſome puniſhment, ſuitable to a crime of ſuch dangerous conſequence to the infernal revenues. Shall he be chained to the rock with PROMETHEUS? Or tremble below the precipice in company with the DANAIDES? Or aſſiſt SISYPHUS in rolling his ſtone? No, ſays MINOS, none of theſe. We muſt invent ſome ſeverer puniſhment. Let him be ſent back to the earth, to ſee the uſe his heirs are making of his riches.

I hope it will not be interpreted as a deſign of ſetting myſelf in oppoſition to this celebrated author, if I proceed to deliver a fable of my own, which is intended to expoſe the ſame vice of avarice. The hint of it was taken from theſe lines of Mr. POPE.

Damn'd to the mines, an equal fate betides
The ſlave that digs it, and the ſlave that hides.

Our old mother Earth once lodged an indictment againſt AVARICE before the courts of heaven, for her wicked and malicious council and advice, in tempting, inducing, perſuading, and traiterouſly ſeducing the children of the plaintiff to commit the deteſtable crime of parricide upon her, and, mangling her body, ranſack her very bowels for hidden treaſure. The indictment was very long and verboſe; but we muſt omit a great part of the repetitions and ſynonymous terms, not to tire our readers too much with our tale. AVARICE, being called before JUPITER to anſwer to this charge, had not much

much to ſay in her own defence. The injuſtice was clearly proved upon her. The fact, indeed, was notorious, and the injury had been frequently repeated. When therefore the plaintiff demanded juſtice, JUPITER very readily gave ſentence in her favour; and his decree was to this purpoſe, That ſince dame *Avarice*, the defendant, had thus grievouſly injured dame *Earth*, the plaintiff, ſhe was hereby ordered to take that treaſure, of which ſhe had felonioufly robbed the ſaid plaintiff, by ranſacking her boſom, and in the ſame manner, as before, opening her boſom, reſtore it back to her, without diminution or retention. From this ſentence, it ſhall follow, ſays JUPITER to the by-ſtanders, That, in all future ages, the retainers of *Avarice* ſhall bury and conceal their riches, and thereby reſtore to the earth what they took from her.

ESSAY XI.

Of the DIGNITY of HUMAN NATURE.

THERE are certain ſects, which ſecretly form themſelves in the learned world, as well as in the political; and tho' ſometimes they come not to an open rupture, yet they give a different turn to the ways of thinking of thoſe who have taken party on either ſide. The moſt remarkable of this kind are the ſects, that are founded on the different ſentiments with regard to the *dignity of human nature*; which is a point that ſeems to have divided philoſophers and poets, as well as divines, from the beginning of the world to this day. Some exalt our ſpecies to the ſkies, and repreſent man as a kind of human demi-god, who derives his origin from heaven, and retains evident marks of his lineage and deſcent. Others inſiſt upon the blind ſides of human nature, and can diſcover nothing, except vanity, in which man ſurpaſſes the other animals, whom he affects ſo much to deſpiſe. If an author poſſeſſes the talent of rhetoric, and declamation, he commonly takes party with the former: If his turn lies towards irony and ridicule, he naturally throws himſelf into the other extreme.

I am far from thinking, that all thoſe, who have depreciated human nature have been enemies to virtue, and have expoſed the frailties of their fellow creatures with any bad intention. On the contrary, I am ſenſible, that a very

a very delicate ſenſe of morals, eſpecially when attended with ſomewhat of the *Miſanthrope*, is apt to give a man a diſguſt of the world, and to make him conſider the common courſe of human affairs with too much ſpleen and indignation. I muſt, however, be of opinion, that the ſentiments of thoſe, who are inclined to think favourably of mankind, are much more advantageous to virtue, than the contrary principles which give us a mean opinion of our nature. When a man is poſſeſſed of a high notion of his rank and character in the creation, he will naturally endeavour to act up to it, and will ſcorn to do a baſe or vicious action, which might ſink him below that figure which he makes in his own imagination. Accordingly we find, that all our polite and faſhionable moraliſts inſiſt upon this topic, and endeavour to repreſent vice as unworthy of man, as well as odious in itſelf.

Women are generally much more flattered in their youth than men; which may proceed from this reaſon, among others, that their chief point of honour is conſidered as much more difficult than ours, and requires to be ſupported by all that decent pride, which can be inſtilled into them.

We find very few diſputes which are not founded on ſome ambiguity in the expreſſion; and I am perſuaded, that the preſent diſpute concerning the dignity of human nature, is not more exempt from it than any other. It may, therefore, be worth while to conſider, what is real, and what is only verbal in this controverſy.

That there is a natural difference between merit and demerit, virtue and vice, wiſdom and folly, no reaſonable man will deny: but yet 'tis evident, that in affixing the term, which denotes either our approbation or blame, we are commonly more influenced by compariſon than

by

by any fixt unalterable ſtandard in the nature of things. In like manner, quantity, and extenſion, and bulk, are by every one acknowledged to be real things: But when we call any animal *great* or *little*, we always form a ſecret compariſon between that animal and others of the ſame ſpecies; and 'tis that compariſon which regulates our judgment concerning its greatneſs. A dog and a horſe may be of the very ſame ſize, while the one is admired for the greatneſs of its bulk, and the other for the ſmallneſs. When I am preſent, therefore, at any diſpute, I always conſider with myſelf, whether it be a queſtion of compariſon or not that is the ſubject of the controverſy; and if it be, whether the diſputants compare the ſame objects together, or talk of things that are widely different. As the latter is commonly the caſe, I have long ſince learnt to neglect ſuch diſputes as manifeſt abuſes of leiſure, the moſt valuable preſent that could be made to mortals.

In forming our notions of human nature, we are very apt to make a compariſon between men and animals, which are the only creatures endowed with thought that fall under our ſenſes. Certainly this compariſon is very favourable to mankind. On the one hand we ſee a creature, whoſe thoughts are not limited by any narrow bounds, either of place or time; who carries his reſearches into the moſt diſtant regions of this globe, and beyond this globe, to the planets and heavenly bodies; looks backward to conſider the firſt origin, at leaſt, the Hiſtory of human race; caſts his eyes forward to ſee the influence of his actions upon poſterity, and the judgments which will be formed of his character a thouſand years hence; a creature, who traces cauſes and effects to a great length and intricacy; extracts general principles from particular appearances; improves upon his diſcoveries; corrects his miſtakes; and makes his very errors pro-

profitable. On the other hand, we are presented with a creature the very reverse of this; limited in its observations and reasonings to a very few sensible objects which surround it; without curiosity, without foresight; blindly conducted by instinct, and attaining in a very short time, its utmost perfection, beyond which it is never able to advance a single step. What a wide difference is there between these creatures! And how exalted a notion must we entertain of the former, in comparison of the latter!

There are two means commonly employed to destroy this conclusion: *First*, By making an unfair representation of the case, and insisting only upon the weaknesses of human nature. And *secondly*, By forming a new and secret comparison between man and beings of the most perfect wisdom. Among the other excellencies of man, this is remarkable, that he can form an idea of perfections much beyond what he has experience of in himself; and is not limited in his conception of wisdom and virtue. He can easily exalt his notions and conceive a degree of knowlege, which, when compared to his own, will make the latter appear very contemptible, and will cause the difference between that and the sagacity of animals, in a manner, to disappear and vanish. Now this being a point, in which all the world is agreed, that human understanding falls infinitely short of perfect wisdom; 'tis proper we should know when this comparison takes place, that we may not dispute, where there is no real difference in our sentiments. Man falls much more short of perfect wisdom, and even of his own ideas of perfect wisdom, than animals do of man; but yet the latter difference is so considerable, that nothing but a comparison with the former, can make it appear of little moment.

'Tis

'Tis alſo very uſual to *compare* one man with another; and finding very few whom we can call *wiſe* or *virtuous*, we are apt to entertain a contemptible notion of our ſpecies in general. That we may be ſenſible of the fallacy of this way of reaſoning, we may obſerve, that the honourable appellations of wiſe and virtuous, are not annexed to any particular degree of thoſe qualities of *wiſdom* and *virtue*; but ariſe altogether from the compariſon we make between one man and another. When we find a man, who arrives at ſuch a pitch of wiſdom as is very uncommon, we pronounce him a wiſe man: So that to ſay, there are few wiſe men in the world, is really to ſay nothing; ſince 'tis only by their ſcarcity, that they merit that appellation. Were the loweſt of our ſpecies as wiſe as TULLY, or my lord BACON, we ſhould ſtill have reaſon to ſay, that there are few wiſe men. For in that caſe we ſhould exalt our notions of wiſdom, and ſhould not pay a ſingular honour to any one, who was not ſingularly diſtinguiſhed by his talents. In like manner, I have heard it obſerved by thoughtleſs people, that there are few women poſſeſſed of beauty, in compariſon of thoſe who want it; not conſidering, that we beſtow the epithet of *beautiful* only on ſuch as poſſeſs a degree of beauty, that is common to them with a few. The ſame degree of beauty in a woman is called deformity, which is treated as real beauty in one of our ſex.

As 'tis uſual, in forming a notion of our ſpecies, to *compare* it with the other ſpecies above or below it, or to compare the individuals of the ſpecies among themſelves; ſo we often compare together the different motives or actuating principles of human nature, in order to regulate our judgment concerning it. And indeed, this is the only kind of compariſon which is worth our attention, or decides any thing in the preſent queſtion. Were

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our ſelfiſh and vicious principles ſo much predominant above our ſocial and virtuous, as is aſſerted by ſome philoſophers, we ought undoubtedly to entertain a contemptible notion of human nature.

There is much of a diſpute of words in all this controverſy. When a man denies the ſincerity of all public ſpirit or affection to a country and community, I am at a loſs what to think of him. Perhaps he never felt this paſſion in ſo clear and diſtinct a manner as to remove all his doubts concerning its force and reality. But when he proceeds afterwards to reject all private friendſhip, if no intereſt or ſelf-love intermixes itſelf; I am then confident that he abuſes terms, and confounds the ideas of things; ſince it is impoſſible for any one to be ſo ſelfiſh, or rather ſo ſtupid, as to make no difference between one man and another, and give no preference to qualities, which engage his approbation and eſteem. Is he alſo, ſay I, as inſenſible to anger as he pretends to be to friendſhip? And does injury and wrong no more affect him than kindneſs or benefits? Impoſſible: He does not know himſelf: He has forgot the movements of his mind; or rather he makes uſe of a different language from the reſt of his countrymen, and calls not things by their proper names. What ſay you of natural affection? (I ſubjoin) Is that alſo a ſpecies of ſelf-love? Yes: All is ſelf-love. *Your* children are loved only becauſe they are yours: *Your* friend for a like reaſon: And *your* country engages you only ſo far as it has a connexion with *yourſelf:* Were the idea of ſelf removed, nothing would affect you: You would be altogether inactive and inſenſible: Or if you ever gave yourſelf any movement, it would only be from vanity, and a deſire of fame and reputation to this ſame ſelf. I am willing, reply I, to receive your interpretation of human actions, provided you admit the facts. That ſpecies of ſelf-love, which

which displays itself in kindness to others, you must allow to have great influence, and even greater, on many occasions, than that which remains in its original shape and form. For how few are there, who, having a family, children, and relations, do not spend more on the maintenance and education of these than on their own pleasures? This, indeed, you justly observe, may proceed from their self-love, since the prosperity of their family and friends is one, or the chief of their pleasures, as well as their chief honour. Be you also one of these selfish men, and you are sure of every one's good opinion and good will; or not to shock your nice ears with these expressions, the self-love of every one, and mine amongst the rest, will then incline us to serve you, and speak well of you.

In my opinion, there are two things which have led astray those philosophers, who have insisted so much on the selfishness of man. In the *first* place, they found, that every act of virtue or friendship was attended with a secret pleasure: from whence they concluded, that friendship and virtue could not be disinterested. But the fallacy of this is obvious. The virtuous sentiment or passion produces the pleasure, and does not arise from it. I feel a pleasure in doing good to my friend, because I love him; but do not love him for the sake of that pleasure.

In the *second* place, it has always been found, that the virtuous are far from being indifferent to praise; and therefore they have been represented as a set of vainglorious men, who had nothing in view but the applauses of others. But this also is a fallacy. 'Tis very unjust in the world, when they find any tincture of vanity in a laudable action, to depreciate it upon that account, or ascribe it entirely to that motive. The case is not the same with vanity, as with other passions. Where avarice

rice or revenge enters into any ſeemingly virtuous action, 'tis difficult for us to determine how far it enters, and 'tis natural to ſuppoſe it the ſole actuating principle. But vanity is ſo cloſely allied to virtue, and to love the fame of laudable actions approaches ſo near the love of laudable actions for their own ſake, that theſe paſſions are more capable of mixture, than any other kinds of affection; and 'tis almoſt impoſſible to have the latter without ſome degree of the former. Accordingly we find, that this paſſion for glory is always warped and varied according to the particular taſte or ſentiment of the mind on which it falls. NERO had the ſame vanity in driving a chariot, that TRAJAN had in governing the empire with juſtice and ability. To love the glory of virtuous actions is a ſure proof of the love of virtuous actions.

ESSAY XII.

Of Civil Liberty.

THOSE who employ their pens on political ſubjects, free from party-rage, and party-prejudices, cultivate a ſcience, which, of all others, contributes moſt to public utility, and even to the private ſatisfaction of thoſe who addict themſelves to the ſtudy of it. I am apt, however, to entertain a ſuſpicion, that the world is ſtill too young to fix many general truths in politics, which will remain true to the lateſt poſterity. We have not as yet had experience of three thouſand years; ſo that not only the art of reaſoning is ſtill defective in this ſcience, as well as in all others, but we even want ſufficient materials upon which we can reaſon. 'Tis not fully known, what degrees of refinement, either in virtue or vice, human nature is ſuſceptible of; nor what may be expected of mankind from any great revolution in their education, cuſtoms or principles. MACHIAVEL was certainly a great genius; but having confined his ſtudy to the furious and tyrannical governments of ancient times, or to the little diſorderly principalities of ITALY, his reaſonings, eſpecially upon monarchical government, have been found extremely defective; and there ſcarce is any maxim in his *prince*, which ſubſequent experience has not entirely refuted. *A weak prince*, ſays he, *is incapable of receiving good counſel; for if he conſult*

with ſeveral, he will not be able to chooſe among their different counſels. If he abandon himſelf to one, that miniſter may, perhaps, have capacity; but he will not be long a miniſter: He will be ſure to diſpoſſeſs his maſter, and place himſelf and his family upon the throne. I mention this, among innumerable inſtances of the errors of that politician, proceeding, in a great meaſure, from his having lived in too early an age of the world, to be a good judge of political truth. Almoſt all the princes of EUROPE are at preſent governed by their miniſters; and have been ſo for near two centuries; and yet no ſuch event has ever happened, or can poſſibly happen. SEJANUS might project dethroning the CÆSARS; but FLEURY, tho' ever ſo vicious, could not, while in his ſenſes, entertain the leaſt hopes of diſpoſſeſſing the BOURBONS.

Trade was never eſteemed an affair of ſtate, 'till the laſt century; and there ſcarcely is any ancient writer on politics, who has made mention of it †. Even the ITALIANS have kept a profound ſilence with regard to it; tho' it has now excited the chief attention, as well of miniſters of ſtate, as of ſpeculative reaſoners. The great opulence, grandeur, and military atchievements of the two maritime powers, ſeem firſt to have inſtructed mankind in the vaſt importance of an extenſive commerce.

Having, therefore, intended in this eſſay to have made a full compariſon of civil liberty and abſolute government, and to have ſhewn the great advantages of the former above the latter; I began to entertain a ſuſpicion, that no man in this age was ſufficiently qualified for ſuch

† XENOPHON mentions it; but with a doubt if it be of any advantage to a ſtate. Εἰδὲ καὶ ἐμπορίαι ὀφελοῦσί τι πόλιν, &c. XEN. HIERO. PLATO totally excludes it from his imaginary republic. De legibus, lib. 4.

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an undertaking; and that whatever any one ſhould advance on that head would, in all probability, be refuted by further experience, and be rejected by poſterity. Such mighty revolutions have happened in human affairs, and ſo many events have ariſen contrary to the expectation of the ancients, that they are ſufficient to beget the ſuſpicion of ſtill further changes.

It had been obſerved by the ancients, that all the arts and ſciences aroſe among free nations; and, that the Persians and Egyptians, notwithſtanding all their eaſe, opulence and luxury, made but faint efforts towards a reliſh in thoſe finer pleaſures, which were carried to ſuch perfection hy the Greeks, amidſt continual wars, attended with poverty, and the greateſt ſimplicity of life and manners. It had alſo been obſerved, that as the Greeks loſt their liberty, tho' they encreaſed mightily in riches, by means of the conqueſt of Alexander; yet the arts, from that moment, declined among them, and have never ſince been able to raiſe their head in that climate. Learning was tranſplanted to Rome, the only free nation at that time in the univerſe; and having met with ſo favourable a ſoil, it made prodigious ſhoots for above a century; till the decay of liberty produced alſo the decay of letters, and ſpread a total barbariſm over the world. From theſe two experiments, of which each was double in its kind, and ſhewed the fall of learning in deſpotic governments, as well as its riſe in popular ones, Longinus thought himſelf ſufficiently juſtified, in aſſerting, that the arts and ſciences could never flouriſh, but in a free government: and in this opinion, he has been followed by ſeveral eminent writers † in our own country, who either confined their view merely to ancient facts, or entertained too great a partiality in fa-

† Mr. Addison and lord Shaftesbury.

vour of that form of government, which is eſtabliſhed amongſt us.

But what would theſe writers have ſaid, to the inſtances of modern ROME and of FLORENCE? Of which the former carried to perfection all the finer arts of ſculpture, painting and muſic, as well as poetry, tho' it groaned under tyranny, and under the tyranny of prieſts: While the latter made the greateſt progreſs in the arts and ſciences, after it began to loſe its liberty by the uſurpations of the family of MEDICIS. ARIOSTO, TASSO, GALILEO, no more than RAPHAEL, and MICHAEL ANGELO, were not born in republics. And tho' the LOMBARD ſchool was famous as well as the ROMAN, yet the VENETIANS have had the ſmalleſt ſhare in its honours, and ſeem rather inferior to the other ITALIANS, in their genius for the arts and ſciences. RUBENS eſtabliſhed his ſchool at ANTWERP, not at AMSTERDAM: DRESDEN, not HAMBURGH, is the centre of politeneſs in GERMANY.

But the moſt eminent inſtance of the flouriſhing of learning in abſolute governments, is that of FRANCE, which ſcarce ever enjoyed any eſtabliſhed liberty, and yet has carried the arts and ſciences as near perfection as any other nation. The ENGLISH are, perhaps, better philoſophers; the ITALIANS better painters and muſicians; the ROMANS were greater orators: But the FRENCH are the only people, except the GREEKS, who have been at once philoſophers, poets, orators, hiſtorians, painters, architects, ſculptors, and muſicians. With regard to the ſtage, they have excelled even the GREEKS, who have far excelled the ENGLISH. And, in common life, they have, in a great meaſure, perfected that art, the moſt uſeful and agreeable of any, *l' Art de Vivre*, the art of ſociety and converſation.

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If we conſider the ſtate of the ſciences and polite arts in our own couutry, HORACE's obſervation, with regard to the ROMANS, may, in a great meaſure, be applied to the BRITISH.

——— *Sed in longum tamen ævum*
Manſerunt, hodieque manent veſtigia ruris.

The elegance and propriety of ſtile have been very much neglected among us. We have no dictionary of our language, and ſcarce a tolerable grammar. The firſt polite proſe we have, was wrote by a man who is ſtill alive*. As to SPRAT, LOCKE, and even TEMPLE, they knew too little of the rules of art to be eſteemed very elegant writers. The proſe of BACON, HARRINGTON, and MILTON, is altogether ſtiff and pedantic; tho' their ſenſe be excellent. Men, in this country, have been ſo much occupied in the great diſputes of *Religion*, *Politics* and *Philoſophy*, that they had no reliſh for the ſeemingly minute obſervations of grammar and criticiſm. And tho' this turn of thinking muſt have conſiderably improved our ſenſe and our talent of reaſoning beyond thoſe of other nations; it muſt be confeſſed, that even in thoſe ſciences above-mentioned, we have not any ſtandard-book, which we can tranſmit to poſterity: And the utmoſt we have to boaſt of, are a few eſſays towards a more juſt philoſophy; which, indeed, promiſe very much, but have not, as yet, reached any degree of perfection.

It has become an eſtabliſhed opinion, that commerce can never flouriſh but in a free government; and this opinion ſeems to be founded on a longer and larger experience than the foregoing, with regard to the arts and ſciences. If we trace commerce in its progreſs thro'

* Dr. SWIFT.

TYRE, ATHENS, SYRACUSE, CARTHAGE, VENICE, FLORENCE, GENOA, ANTWERP, HOLLAND, ENGLAND, &c. we ſhall always find it to have fixt its ſeat in free governments. The three greateſt trading towns now in the world, are LONDON, AMSTERDAM, and HAMBURGH; all free cities, and proteſtant cities; that is, enjoying a double liberty. It muſt, however, be obſerved, that the great jealouſy entertained of late, with regard to the commerce of FRANCE, ſeems to prove, that this maxim is no more certain and infallible, than the foregoing, and that the ſubjects of an abſolute prince may become our rivals in commerce, as well as in learning.

Durſt I deliver my opinion in an affair of ſo much uncertainty, I would aſſert, that, notwithſtanding the efforts of the FRENCH, there is ſomething hurtful to commerce inherent in the very nature of abſolute government, and inſeparable from it: Tho' the reaſon I would aſſign for this opinion, is ſomewhat different from that which is commonly inſiſted on. Private property ſeems to me almoſt as ſecure in a civilized EUROPEAN monarchy, as in a republic; nor is danger much apprehended in ſuch a government, from the violence of the ſovereign; more than we commonly dread harm from thunder, or earthquakes, or any accident the moſt unuſual and extraordinary. Avarice, the ſpur of induſtry, is ſo obſtinate a paſſion, and works its way thro' ſo many real dangers and difficulties, that 'tis not likely it will be ſcared by an imaginary danger, which is ſo ſmall, that it ſcarce admits of calculation. Commerce, therefore, in my opinion, is apt to decay in abſolute governments, not becauſe it is there leſs *ſecure*, but becauſe it is leſs *honourable*. A ſubordination of ranks is abſolutely neceſſary to the ſupport of monarchy. Birth, titles, and place, muſt be honoured above induſtry and riches. And while

while theſe notions prevail, all the conſiderable traders will be tempted to throw up their commerce, in order to purchaſe ſome of thoſe employments, to which privileges and honours are annexed.

Since I am upon this head of the alterations which time has produced, or may produce in politics, I muſt obſerve, that all kinds of government, free and abſolute, ſeem to have undergone, in modern times, a great change to the better, with regard both to foreign and domeſtic management. The *balance of power* is a ſecret in politics, fully known only to the preſent age; and I muſt add, that the internal Police of the ſtate has alſo received great improvements within the laſt century. We are informed by Sallust, that Cataline's army was much augmented by the acceſſion of the highwaymen about Rome; tho' I believe, that all of that profeſſion, who are at preſent diſperſed over Europe, would not amount to a regiment. In Cicero's pleadings for Milo, I find this argument, among others, made uſe of to prove, that his client had not aſſaſſinated Clodius. Had Milo, ſaid he, intended to have killed Clodius, he had not attacked him in the day-time, and at ſuch a diſtance from the city: He had way-laid him at night, near the ſuburbs, where it might have been pretended, that he was killed by robbers; and the frequency of the accident would have favoured the deceit. This is a ſurprizing proof of the looſe police of Rome, and of the number and force of theſe robbers; ſince Clodius * was at that time attended with thirty ſlaves, who were compleatly armed, and ſufficiently accuſtomed to blood and danger in the frequent tumults excited by that ſeditious tribune.

But tho' all kinds of government be improved in modern times, yet monarchical government ſeems to have

* *Vide Aſc. Ped. in Orat. pro Milone.*

made the greateſt advances towards perfection. It may now be affirmed of civilized monarchies, what was formerly ſaid in praiſe of republics alone, *that they are a government of Laws, not of men.* They are found ſuſceptible of order, method, and conſtancy, to a ſurprizing degree. Property is there ſecure; induſtry encouraged; the arts flouriſh; and the prince lives ſecure among his ſubjects, like a father among his children. There are perhaps, and have been for two centuries, near two hundred abſolute princes, great and ſmall, in EUROPE; and allowing twenty years to each reign, we may ſuppoſe, that there have been in the whole two thouſand monarchs or tyrants, as the GREEKS would have called them: Yet of theſe there has not been one, not even PHILIP II. of SPAIN, ſo bad as TIBERIUS, CALIGULA, NERO, or DOMITIAN, who were four in twelve amongſt the ROMAN emperors. It muſt, however, be confeſſed, that tho' monarchical governments have approached nearer to popular ones, in gentleneſs and ſtability; they are ſtill much inferior. Our modern education and cuſtoms inſtil more humanity and moderation than the ancient; but have not as yet been able to overcome entirely the diſadvantages of that form of government.

But here I muſt beg leave to advance a conjecture, which ſeems very probable, but which poſterity alone can fully judge of. I am apt to think, that in monarchical governments there is a ſource of improvement, and in popular governments a ſource of degeneracy, which in time will bring theſe ſpecies of government ſtill nearer an equality. The greateſt abuſes which ariſe in FRANCE, the moſt perfect model of pure monarchy, proceed not from the number or weight of the taxes, beyond what are to be met with in free countries; but from the expenſive, unequal, arbitrary, and intricate method

method of levying them, by which the induſtry of the poor, eſpecially of the peaſants and farmers, is, in a great meaſure, diſcouraged, and agriculture rendered a beggarly and ſlaviſh employment. But to whoſe advantage do theſe abuſes tend? If to that of the nobility, they might be eſteemed inherent in that form of government; ſince the nobility are the true ſupports of monarchy; and 'tis natural their intereſt ſhould be more conſulted, in ſuch a conſtitution, than that of the people. But the nobility are, in reality, the principal loſers by this oppreſſion; ſince it ruins their eſtates, and beggars their tenants. The only gainers by it are the *Finançiers*, a race of men rather odious to the nobility and the whole kingdom. If a prince or miniſter, therefore, ſhould ariſe endowed with ſufficient diſcernment to know his own and the public intereſt, and with ſufficient force of mind to break thro' ancient cuſtoms, we might expect to ſee theſe abuſes remedied; in which caſe, the difference between their abſolute government and our free one, would not appear ſo conſiderable as at preſent.

The ſource of degeneracy, which may be remarked in free governments, conſiſts in the practice of contracting debt, and mortgaging the public revenues, by which taxes may, in time, become altogether intolerable, and all the property of the ſtate be brought into the hands of the public. This practice is of modern date. The ATHENIANS, tho' governed by a republic, paid near two hundred *per Cent.* for thoſe ſums of money, which any emergent occaſion made it neceſſary for them to borrow; as we learn from XENOPHON *. Among the moderns, the DUTCH firſt introduced the practice of borrowing

* Κτῆσιν δὲ ἀπ' οὐδενὸς ἂν οὕτω καλὴν κτήσαιντο ὥσπερ ἀφ' οὗ ἀνπροτελέσωσιν εἰς τὴν ἀφορμὴν.—οἱ δέ γε πλείστοι Ἀθηναίων πλείονα λήψονται κατ' ἐνιαυτὸν ἢ ὅσα ἂν εἰσενέγκοσιν, οἱ γὰρ μνᾶν προτελέσαντες, ἐγγὺς δυοῖν μνᾶν προσόδον ἔξουσι—ὃ δέκει τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων ἀσφαλέστατόν τε καὶ πολυχρονιώτατον εἶναι. ΞΕΝ. ΠΟΡΟΙ.

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great ſums at low intereſt, and have well nigh ruined themſelves by it. Abſolute princes have alſo contracted debt; but as an abſolute prince may play the bankrupt when he pleaſes, his people can never be oppreſt by his debts. In popular governments, the people, and chiefly thoſe who have the higheſt offices, being commonly the public creditors, 'tis difficult for the ſtate to make uſe of this remedy, which, however it may be ſometimes neceſſary, is always cruel and barbarous. This, therefore, ſeems to be an inconvenience, which nearly threatens all free governments; eſpecially our own, at the preſent juncture of affairs. And what a ſtrong motive is this, to increaſe our frugality of the public money; leſt, for want of it, we be reduced, by the multiplicity of taxes, to curſe our free government, and wiſh ourſelves in the ſame ſtate of ſervitude with all the nations that ſurround us?

ESSAY

ESSAY XIII.

Of ELOQUENCE.

THOSE, who conſider the periods and revolutions of human kind, as repreſented in hiſtory, are entertained with a ſpectacle full of pleaſure and variety, and ſee, with ſurprize, the manners, cuſtoms, and opinions of the ſame ſpecies ſuſceptible of ſuch prodigious changes in different periods of time. It may, however, be obſerved, that in *civil* hiſtory there is found a much greater uniformity than in the hiſtory of learning and ſcience, and that the wars, negotiations, and politics of one age reſemble more thoſe of another, than the taſte, wit, and ſpeculative principles. Intereſt and ambition, honour and ſhame, friendſhip and enmity, gratitude and revenge, are the prime movers in all public tranſactions; and theſe paſſions are of a very ſtubborn and intractable nature, in compariſon of the ſentiments and underſtanding, which are eaſily varied by education and example. The GOTHS were much more inferior to the ROMANS, in taſte and ſcience, than in courage and virtue.

But not to compare together nations ſo widely different, that they may almoſt be eſteemed of a different ſpecies; it may be obſerved, that even this latter period of human learning, is, in many reſpects, of an oppoſite character to the ancient; and that if we be ſuperior in phi-

philoſophy, we are ſtill, notwithſtanding all our refinements, much inferior in eloquence.

In ancient times, no work of genius was thought to require ſo great parts and capacity, as the ſpeaking in public; and ſome eminent writers have pronounced the talents, even of a great poet or philoſopher, to be of an inferior nature to thoſe requiſite for ſuch an undertaking. GREECE and ROME produced, each of them, but one accompliſhed orator; and whatever praiſes the other celebrated ſpeakers might merit, they were ſtill eſteemed much inferior to theſe great models of eloquence. 'Tis obſervable, that the ancient critics could ſcarce find two orators in any age, who deſerved to be placed preciſely in the ſame rank, and poſſeſſed the ſame degree of merit. CALVUS, CÆLIUS, CURIO, HORTENSIUS, CÆSAR roſe one above another: But the greateſt of that age was inferior to CICERO, the moſt eloquent ſpeaker, who had ever appeared in ROME. Thoſe of fine taſte, however, pronounced this judgment of the ROMAN orator, as well as of the GRECIAN, that both of them ſurpaſſed in eloquence all that had ever appeared, but that they were far from reaching the perfection of their art, which was infinite, and not only exceeded human force to attain, but human imagination to conceive. CICERO declares himſelf diſſatisfied with his own performances; nay, even with thoſe of DEMOSTHENES. *Ita ſunt avidæ & capaces meæ aures*, ſays he, *& ſemper aliquid immenſum, infinitumque deſiderant.*

This ſingle circumſtance is ſufficient to make us apprehend the wide difference between ancient and modern eloquence, and to let us ſee how much the latter is inferior to the former. Of all the polite and learned nations, BRITAIN alone poſſeſſes a popular government, or admits into the legiſlature ſuch numerous aſſemblies as can be ſuppoſed to lie under the dominion of eloquence.

But

But what has BRITAIN to boaſt of in this particular? In enumerating all the great men, who have done honour to our country, we exult in our poets and philoſophers; but what orators are ever mentioned? Or where are the monuments of their genius to be met with? There are found, indeed, in our hiſtories, the names of ſeveral, who directed the reſolutions of our parliament: But neither themſelves nor others have taken the pains to preſerve their ſpeeches; and the authority which they poſſeſſed, ſeems to have been owing to their experience, wiſdom, or power, more than to their talents for oratory. At preſent, there are above half a dozen ſpeakers in the two houſes, who, in the judgment of the public, have reached very near the ſame pitch of eloquence; and no man pretends to give any one the preference to the reſt. This ſeems to me a certain proof, that none of them have attained much beyond a mediocrity in their art, and that the ſpecies of eloquence, which they aſpire to, gives no exerciſe to the ſublimer faculties of the mind, but may be reached by ordinary talents and a ſlight application. A hundred cabinet-makers in LONDON can work a table or a chair equally well; but no one poet can write verſes with ſuch ſpirit and elegance as Mr. POPE.

We are told, that when DEMOSTHENES was to plead, all ingenious men flocked to ATHENS from the moſt remote parts of GREECE, as to the moſt celebrated ſpectacle of the world †. At LONDON you may ſee men ſauntering in the court of requeſts, while the moſt important debate is carrying on in the two houſes; and

† Ne illud quidem intelligunt, non modo ita memoriæ proditum eſſe, ſed ita neceſſe fuiſſe, cum DEMOSTHENES dicturus eſſet, ut concurſus, audiendi cauſa, ex tota GRECIA fierent. At cum iſti ATTICI dicunt, non modo a corona (quod eſt ipſum miſerabile) ſed etiam ab advocatis relinquuntur.

CICERO de Claris Oratoribus.

many

many do not think themſelves ſufficiently compenſated, for the loſing of their dinners, by all the eloquence of our moſt celebrated ſpeakers. When old CIBBER is to act, the curioſity of ſeveral is more excited, than when our prime miniſter is to defend himſelf from a motion for his removal or impeachment.

Even a perſon unacquainted with the noble remains of ancient orators, may judge, from a few ſtrokes, that the ſtile or ſpecies of their eloquence was infinitely more ſublime than that which modern orators aſpire to. How abſurd would it appear, in our temperate and calm ſpeakers, to make uſe of an *Apoſtrophe*, like that noble one of DEMOSTHENES, ſo much celebrated by QUINCTILIAN and LONGINUS, when, juſtifying the unſucceſsful battle of CHÆRONEA, he breaks out, *No, my Fellow-Citizens, No: You have not erred. I ſwear by the manes of thoſe heroes, who fought for the ſame cauſe in the plains of* MARATHON and PLATÆA. Who could now endure ſuch a bold and poetical figure, as that which CICERO employs, after deſcribing in the moſt tragical terms the crucifixion of a ROMAN citizen. *Should I paint the horrors of this ſcene, not to* ROMAN *citizens, not to the allies of our ſtate, not to thoſe who have ever heard of the* ROMAN *Name, not even to men, but to brute-creatures; or, to go farther, ſhould I lift up my voice, in the moſt deſolate ſolitude, to the rocks and mountains, yet ſhould I ſurely ſee thoſe rude and inanimate parts of nature moved with horror and indignation at the recital of ſo enormous an action*†. With what a blaze of eloquence muſt ſuch

† *The original is*; Quod ſi hæc non ad cives Romanos, non ad aliquos amicos noſtræ civitatis, non ad eos qui populi Romani nomen audiſſent; denique, ſi non ad homines, verum ad beſtias; aut etiam, ut longius progrediar, ſi in aliqua deſertiſſima ſolitudine, ad ſaxa & ad ſcopulos hæc conqueri & deplorare vellem, tamen omnia muta atque inanima, tanta & tam indigna rerum atrocitate commoverentur. Cic. in ver.

a ſentence be ſurrounded to give it grace, or cauſe it to make any impreſſion on the hearers? And what noble art and ſublime talents are requiſite to arrive, by juſt degrees, at a ſentiment ſo bold and exceſſive: To inflame the audience, ſo as to make them accompany the ſpeaker in ſuch violent paſſions, and ſuch elevated conceptions: And to conceal, under a torrent of eloquence, the artifice, by which all this is effectuated!

Suitable to this vehemence of thought and expreſſion, was the vehemence of action, obſerved in the ancient orators. The *ſupploſio pedis*, or ſtamping of the foot, was one of the moſt uſual and moderate geſtures which they made uſe of †; tho' that is now eſteemed too violent, either for the ſenate, bar, or pulpit, and is only admitted into the theatre, to accompany the moſt violent paſſions, which are there repreſented.

One is ſomewhat at a loſs to what cauſe we may aſcribe ſo ſenſible a decline of eloquence in latter ages. The genius of mankind, at all times, is, perhaps, equal: The moderns have applied themſelves, with great induſtry and ſucceſs, to all the other arts and ſciences: And one of the moſt learned nations of the univerſe poſſeſſes a popular government; a circumſtance which ſeems requiſite for the full diſplay of theſe noble talents: But notwithſtanding all theſe advantages, our progreſs in eloquence is very inconſiderable, in compariſon of the advances, which we have made in all the other parts of learning.

Shall we aſſert, that the ſtrains of ancient eloquence are unſuitable to our age, and not to be imitated by

† Ubi dolor? Ubi ardor animi, qui etiam ex infantium ingeniis elicere voces & querelas ſolet? nulla perturbatio animi, nulla corporis: frons non percuſſa, non femur; pedis *(quod minimum eſt)* nulla ſupploſio. Itaque tantum abſuit ut inflammares noſtros animos; ſomnum iſto loco vix tenebamus. Cicero de Claris Oratoribus.

modern

modern orators? Whatever reasons may be made use of to prove this, I am perſuaded they will be found, upon examination, to be unſound and unſatisfactory.

First, It may be ſaid, that in ancient times, during the flouriſhing period of the GREEK and ROMAN learning, the municipal laws, in every ſtate were but few and ſimple, and the deciſion of cauſes was, in a great meaſure, left to the equity and common ſenſe of the judges. The ſtudy of the laws was not then a laborious occupation, requiring the drudgery of a whole life to finiſh it, and utterly incompatible with every other ſtudy or profeſſion. The great ſtateſmen and generals among the ROMANS were all lawyers; and CICERO, to ſhew the facility of acquiring this ſcience, declares, that in the midſt of all his occupations, he would undertake, in a few days, to make himſelf a compleat civilian. Now, where a pleader addreſſes himſelf to the equity of his judges, he has much more room to diſplay his eloquence, than where he muſt draw his arguments from ſtrict laws, ſtatutes, and precedents. In the former caſe, many circumſtances muſt be taken in, many perſonal conſiderations regarded; and even favour and inclination, which it belongs to the orator, by his art and eloquence, to conciliate, may be diſguiſed under the appearance of equity. But how ſhall a modern lawyer have leiſure to quit his toilſome occupations, in order to gather the flowers of PARNASSUS? Or what opportunity ſhall he have of diſplaying them, amidſt the rigid and ſubtile arguments, objections, and replies, which he is obliged to make uſe of? The greateſt genius, and greateſt orator, who ſhould pretend to plead before the *Chancellor*, after a month's ſtudy of the laws, would only labour to make himſelf ridiculous.

I am ready to own, that this circumſtance, of the multiplicity and intricacy of laws, is a diſcouragement

to

to eloquence in modern times: But I aſſert, that it will not account entirely for the decline of that noble art. It may baniſh oratory from WESTMINSTER-HALL, but not from either houſe of parliament. Among the ATHENIANS, the AREOPAGITES expreſly forbad all allurements of eloquence; and ſome have pretended that in the GREEK orations wrote in the *judiciary* form, there is not ſuch a bold and rhetorical ſtile, as appears in the ROMAN. But to what a pitch did the ATHENIANS carry their eloquence in the *deliberative* kind, when affairs of ſtate were canvaſſed, and the liberty, happineſs, and honour of the republic were the ſubject of debate? Diſputes of this nature elevate the genius above all others, and give the fulleſt ſcope to eloquence; and ſuch diſputes are very frequent in this nation.

Secondly, It may be pretended, that the decline of eloquence is owing to the ſuperior good ſenſe of the moderns, who reject with diſdain, all thoſe rhetorical tricks, employed to ſeduce the judges, and will admit of nothing but ſolid argument in any debate or deliberation. If a man be accuſed of murder, the fact muſt be proved by witneſſes and evidence; and the laws will afterwards determine the puniſhment of the criminal. It would be ridiculous to deſcribe, in ſtrong colours, the horror and cruelty of the action: To introduce the relations of the dead; and, at a ſignal, make them throw themſelves at the feet of the judges, imploring juſtice with tears and lamentations: And ſtill more ridiculous would it be, to employ a picture repreſenting the bloody deed, in order to move the judges by the diſplay of ſo tragical a ſpectacle: Tho' we know, that this poor artifice was ſometimes practiſed by the pleaders of old *. Now, baniſh the pathetic from public diſcourſes, and you

* QUINTIL. lib. 6. cap. 1.

reduce the ſpeakers merely to modern eloquence, that is, to good ſenſe, delivered in proper expreſſions.

Perhaps it may be acknowledged, that our modern cuſtoms, or our ſuperior good-ſenſe, if you will, ſhould make our orators more cautious and reſerved than the ancient, in attempting to inflame the paſſions, or elevate the imagination of their audience: But, I ſee no reaſon, why it ſhould make them deſpair abſolutely of ſucceeding in that attempt. It ſhould make them redouble their art, not abandon it intirely. The ancient orators ſeem alſo to have been on their guard againſt this jealouſy of their audience; but they took a different way of eluding it†. They hurried away with ſuch a torrent of ſublime and pathetic, that they left their hearers no leiſure to perceive the artifice, by which they were deceived. Nay, to conſider the matter aright, they were not deceived by any artifice. The orator, by the force of his own genius and eloquence, firſt inflamed himſelf with anger, indignation, pity, ſorrow; and then communicated thoſe impetuous movements to his audience.

Does any man pretend to have more good ſenſe than JULIUS CÆSAR? Yet that haughty conqueror, we know, was ſo ſubdued by the charms of CICERO's eloquence, that he was, in a manner, conſtrained to change his ſettled purpoſe and reſolution, and to abſolve a criminal, whom, before that orator pleaded, he was determined to condemn.

Some objections, I own, notwithſtanding his vaſt ſucceſs, may lie againſt ſome paſſages of the ROMAN orator. He is too florid and rhetorical: His figures are too ſtriking and palpable: The Diviſions of his Diſcourſe drawn chiefly from the rules of the ſchools: And his wit diſdains not always the artifice even of a pun, rhyme,

† LONGINUS, cap. 15.

or jingle of words. The GRECIAN addreſſed himſelf to an audience much leſs refined than the ROMAN ſenate or judges. The loweſt vulgar of ATHENS were his ſovereigns, and the arbiters of his eloquence †. Yet is his manner much more chaſte and auſtere than that of the other. Could it be copied, its ſucceſs would be infallible over a modern aſſembly. 'Tis rapid harmony, exactly adjuſted to the ſenſe: 'Tis vehement reaſoning, without any appearance of art: 'Tis diſdain, anger, boldneſs, freedom, involved in a continued ſtream of argument: And of all human productions, the orations of DEMOSTHENES preſent to us the models, which approach the neareſt to perfection.

Thirdly, It may be pretended, that the diſorders of the ancient governments, and the enormous crimes, of which the citizens were often guilty, afforded much ampler matter for eloquence than can be met with among the moderns. Were there no VERRES or CATALINE, there would be no CICERO. But that this reaſon can have no great influence, is evident. It would be eaſy to find a PHILIP in modern times; but where ſhall we find a DEMOSTHENES?

What remains, then, but that we lay the blame on the want of genius, or of judgment in our ſpeakers, who either found themſelves incapable of reaching the heights of ancient eloquence, or rejected all ſuch endeavours, as unſuitable to the ſpirit of modern aſſemblies? A few

† The orators formed the taſte of the ATHENIAN people, not the people of the orators. GORGIAS LEONTINUS was very taking with them, till they became acquainted with a better manner. His figures of ſpeech, ſays DIODORUS SICULUS, his antitheſis, his ἰσοκωλα, his ὁμοιοτελευτον, which are now deſpiſed, had a great effect upon the audience. Lib. 12. page 106. *ex editione* RHOD: 'Tis in vain therefore for modern orators to plead the taſte of their hearers as an apology for their lame performances. It would be ſtrange prejudice in favour of antiquity, not to allow a BRITISH parliament to be naturally ſuperior in judgment and delicacy to an ATHENIAN mob.

successful attempts of this nature might rouze the genius of the nation, excite the emulation of the youth, and accustom our ears to a more sublime and more pathetic elocution, than what we have been hitherto entertained with. There is certainly something accidental in the first rise and the progress of the arts in any nation. I doubt whether a very satisfactory reason can be given, why ancient ROME, tho' it received all its arts from GREECE, could attain only to a taste or relish of statuary, painting and architecture, without reaching the practice of these noble arts: While modern ROME has been excited, by a few remains found among the ruins of antiquity, and has carried these arts to the greatest perfection. Had such a cultivated genius for oratory, as WALLER's for poetry, arisen, during the civil wars, when liberty began to be fully established, and popular assemblies to enter into all the most material points of government; I am persuaded so illustrious an example would have given a quite different turn to BRITISH eloquence, and made us reach the perfection of the ancient model. Our orators would then have done honour to their country, as well as our poets and philosophers, and BRITISH CICEROS have appeared as well as BRITISH PLUTARCHS and VIRGILS.

I have confest that there is something accidental in the origin and progress of the arts in any nation; and yet I cannot forbear thinking, that if the other learned and polite nations of EUROPE had possest the same advantages of a popular government, they would probably have carried eloquence to a greater height than it has yet reached in BRITAIN. The FRENCH sermons, especially those of FLECHIER and BOSSUET, are much superior to the ENGLISH in this particular; and in both these authors are found many strokes of the most sublime poetry. None but private causes, in that country, are ever debated

heard before their parliaments or courts of judicature; but notwithstanding this disadvantage, there appears a spirit of eloquence in many of their lawyers, which, with proper cultivation and encouragement, might rise to the greatest height. The pleadings of PATRU are very elegant, and give us room to imagine what so fine a genius could have performed in questions concerning public liberty or slavery, peace or war, who exerts himself with such success, in debates concerning the price of an old horse, or a gossiping story of a quarrel between an abbess and her nuns. For 'tis remarkable, that this polite writer, tho' esteemed by all the men of wit in his time, was never employed in the most considerable causes in their courts of judicature, but lived and died in poverty: From an ancient prejudice industriously propagated by the dunces in all countries, *That a man of genius is unfit for business.* The disorders produced by the factions against cardinal MAZARINE, made the parliament of PARIS enter into the discussion of public affairs, and during that short interval, there appeared many symptoms of the revival of ancient eloquence. The *avocat general* TALON, in an oration, invoked on his knees, the spirit of St. LOUIS to look down with compassion on his divided and unhappy people, and to inspire them, from above, with the love of concord and unanimity †. The members of the FRENCH academy have attempted to give us models of eloquence in their harangues at their admittance: But, having no subject to discourse upon, they have run altogether into a fulsome strain of panegyric and flattery, the most barren of all subjects. Their stile, however, is commonly, on these occasions, very elevated and sublime, and might reach the greatest heights, were it employed on a subject more favourable and engaging.

† DE RETZ's Memoirs.

There are some circumstances, I confess, in the ENGLISH temper and genius, which are disadvantageous to the progress of eloquence, and render all attempts of that kind more dangerous and difficult among them than among any other nation. The ENGLISH are conspicuous for *good-sense*, which makes them very jealous of any attempts to deceive them by the flowers of rhetoric and elocution. They are also peculiarly *modest*; which makes them consider it as a piece of arrogance to offer any thing but reason to public assemblies, or attempt to guide them by passion or fancy. I may, perhaps, be allowed to add, that the people in general are not remarkable for delicacy of taste, or for sensibility to the charms of the muses. Their *musical parts*, to use the expression of a noble author, are but indifferent. Hence their comic poets, to move them, must have recourse to obscenity; their tragic poets to blood and slaughter: And hence their orators, being deprived of any such resource, have abandoned altogether the hopes of moving them, and have confined themselves to plain argument and reasoning.

These circumstances, joined to particular accidents, may, perhaps, have retarded the growth of eloquence in this kingdom; but will not be able to prevent its success, if ever it appear amongst us: And one may safely pronounce, that this is a field, in which the most flourishing laurels may yet be gathered, if any youth of accomplished genius, thoroughly acquainted with all the polite arts, and not ignorant of public business, should appear in parliament, and accustom our ears to an eloquence more commanding and pathetic. And to confirm me in this opinion, there occur two considerations, the one derived from ancient, the other from modern times.

'Tis seldom or never found, when a false taste in poetry or eloquence prevails among any people, that it has been

been preferred to a true, upon comparison and reflection. It commonly prevails merely from ignorance of the true, and from the want of perfect models, to lead men into a juster apprehension, and more refined relish of those productions of genius. When *these* appear, they soon unite all suffrages in their favour, and, by their natural and powerful charms, gain over, even the most prejudiced, to the love and admiration of them. The principles of every passion, and of every sentiment, is in every man; and when touched properly, they rise to life, and warm the heart, and convey that satisfaction by which a work of genius is distinguished from the adulterate beauties of a capricious wit and fancy. And if this observation be true, with regard to all the liberal arts, it must be peculiarly so, with regard to eloquence; which, being merely calculated for the public, and for men of the world, cannot, with any pretence of reason, appeal from the people to more refined judges; but must submit to the public verdict, without reserve or limitation. Whoever, upon comparison, is deemed by a common audience the greatest orator, ought most certainly to be pronounced such, by men of science and erudition. And tho' an indifferent orator may triumph for a long time, and be esteemed altogether perfect by the vulgar, who are satisfied with his accomplishments, and know not in what he is defective: Yet, whenever the true genius arises, *he* draws to him the attention of every one, and immediately appears superior to his rival.

Now to judge by this rule, ancient eloquence, that is, the sublime and passionate, is of a much juster taste than the modern, or the argumentative and rational; and, if properly executed, will always have more command and authority over mankind. We are satisfied with our mediocrity, because we have had no experience of any thing better; But the ancients had experience of both,

and, upon comparison, gave the preference to that kind of which they have left us such applauded models. For, if I am not mistaken, our modern eloquence is of the same stile or species with that which ancient critics denominated ATTIC eloquence, that is, calm, elegant and subtile, which instructed the reason more than affected the passions, and never raised its tone above argument or common discourse. Such was the eloquence of LYSIAS among the ATHENIANS, and of CALVUS among the ROMANS. These were esteemed in their time; but when compared with DEMOSTHENES and CICERO, were eclipsed like a taper when set in the rays of a meridian sun. Those latter orators possessed the same elegance and subtilty, and force of argument, with the former; but what rendered them chiefly admirable, was that pathetic and sublime, which, on proper occasions, they threw into their discourse, and by which they commanded the resolutions of their audience.

Of this species of eloquence we have scarce had any instances in BRITAIN, at least in our public speakers. In our writers, we have had some instances, which have met with great applause, and might assure our ambitious youth of equal or superior glory in attempts for the revival of ancient eloquence. Lord BOLINGBROKE's productions, with all their defects in argument, method and precision, contain a force and energy, which our orators scarce ever aim at; tho' 'tis evident, that such an elevated stile has much better grace in a speaker than in a writer, and is assured of more prompt and more astonishing success. 'Tis there seconded by the graces of voice and action. The movements are mutually communicated between the orator and the audience: And the very aspect of a large assembly, attentive to the discourse of one man, must inspire him with a peculiar elevation, sufficient to give a propriety to the strongest figures

figures and expressions. 'Tis true, there is a great prejudice against *set speeches*; and a man can scarce escape ridicule, who repeats a discourse as a school-boy his lesson, and takes no notice of any thing which has been advanced in the course of the debate. But where is the necessity of falling into this absurdity? A public speaker must know beforehand the question under debate. He may compose all the arguments, objections, and answers, such as he thinks will be most proper for his discourse †. If any thing new occur, he may supply it from his invention; nor will the difference be very apparent between his elaborate and his extemporary compositions. The mind naturally continues with the same *impetus* or *force*, which it has acquired by its motion; as a vessel, once impelled by the oars, carries on its course for some time, when the original impulse is suspended.

I shall conclude this subject with observing, that even tho' our modern orators should not elevate their stile or aspire to a rivalship with the ancient; yet there is a material defect in most of their speeches, which they might correct, without departing from that composed air of argument and reasoning, to which they limit their ambition. Their great affectation of extemporary discourses has made them reject all order and method, which seems so requisite to argument, and without which 'tis scarce possible to produce an entire conviction on the mind. 'Tis not, that one would recommend many formal divisions in a public discourse, unless the subject very evidently offer them: But 'tis easy, without this formality, to observe a method, and make that method conspicuous to the hearers, who will be infinitely pleased

† The first of the ATHENIANS, who composed and wrote his speeches, was PERICLES, a man of business and a man of sense, if ever there was one, Πρῶτος γραπτὸν λόγον ἐν δικαστηρίῳ εἶπε, τῶν πρὸ αὐτῷ σχεδιαζόντων. Suidas in Περικλής.

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to see the arguments rise naturally from one another, and will retain a more thorough persuasion, than can arise from the strongest reasons, which are thrown together in confusion.

ESSAY

ESSAY XIV.

Of the RISE and PROGRESS of the ARTS and SCIENCES.

THERE is nothing which requires greater nicety, in our inquiries concerning human affairs, than to diſtinguiſh exactly what is owing to *chance*, and what proceeds from *cauſes*; nor is there any ſubject, in which an author is more liable to deceive himſelf by falſe ſubtilties and refinements. To ſay, that any event is derived from chance, cuts ſhort all farther enquiry concerning it, and leaves the writer in the ſame ſtate of ignorance with the reſt of mankind. But when the event is ſuppoſed to proceed from certain and ſtable cauſes, he may then diſplay his ingenuity, in aſſigning theſe cauſes; and as a man of any ſubtilty can never be at a loſs in this particular, he has thereby an opportunity of ſwelling his volumes, and diſcovering his profound knowledge in obſerving what eſcapes the vulgar and ignorant.

The diſtinguiſhing between chance and cauſes muſt depend upon every particular man's ſagacity, in conſidering every particular incident. But, if I were to aſſign any general rule to help us in applying this diſtinction, it would be the following, *What depends upon a few perſons is, in a great meaſure, to be aſcribed to chance, or ſecret and unknown cauſes: What ariſes from a great number, may often be accounted for by determinate and known cauſes.*

There

There may two very natural reasons be assigned for this rule. *First*, If you suppose a dye to have any bias, however small, to a particular side, this bias, tho' perhaps, it may not appear in a few throws, will certainly prevail in a great number, and will cast the balance entirely to that side. In like manner, when any *cause* begets a particular inclination or passion, at a certain time, and among a certain people; tho' many individuals may escape the contagion, and be ruled by passions peculiar to themselves; yet the multitude will certainly be infected with the common affection, and be governed by it in all their actions.

Secondly, Those principles or causes, which are fitted to operate on a multitude, are always of a grosser and more stubborn nature, less subject to accidents, and less influenced by whim and private fancy, than those which operate on a few only. The latter are commonly so delicate and refined, that the smallest incident in the health, education, or fortune of a particular person, is sufficient to divert their course, and retard their operation; nor is it possible to reduce them to any general maxims or observations. Their influence at one time will never assure us concerning their influence at another; even tho' all the general circumstances should be the same in both cases.

To judge by this rule, the domestic and the gradual revolutions of a state, must be a more proper subject of reasoning and observation, than the foreign and the violent, which are commonly produced by single persons, and are more influenced by whim, folly, or caprice, than by general passions and interests. The depression of the lords, and rise of the commons in ENGLAND, after the statutes of alienation, and the increase of trade and industry, are more easily accounted for by general principles,

ciples, than the depression of the SPANISH, and rise of the FRENCH monarchy, after the death of CHARLES QUINT. Had HARRY IV. Cardinal RICHELIEU, and LOUIS XIV. been SPANIARDS, and PHILIP II. III. and IV. and CHARLES II. been FRENCHMEN, the history of these two nations had been entirely reversed.

For the same reason, 'tis more easy to account for the rise and progress of commerce in any kingdom, than for that of learning; and a state which should apply itself to the encouragement of the one, would be much more assured of success, than one which should cultivate the other. Avarice, or the desire of gain, is an universal passion, which operates at all times, in all places, and upon all persons: But curiosity, or the love of knowledge, has a very limited influence, and requires youth, leisure, education, genius, and example, to make it govern any person. You will never want booksellers, while there are buyers of books: But there may frequently be readers, where there are no authors. Multitudes of people, necessity and liberty, have begot commerce in HOLLAND: But study and application have scarce produced any eminent writers.

We may, therefore, conclude, that there is no subject, in which we must proceed with more caution, than in tracing the history of the arts and sciences; lest we assign causes, which never existed, and reduce what is merely contingent to stable and universal principles. Those, who cultivate the sciences in any state, are always few in number. The passion, which governs them, limited. Their taste and judgment tender and easily perverted. And their application disturbed with the smallest accident. Chance, therefore, or secret and unknown causes, must have a great influence on the rise and progress of all the refined arts.

But

But there is a reason, which induces me not to aſcribe the matter altogether to chance. Tho' the perſons, who cultivate the ſciences with ſuch aſtoniſhing ſucceſs, as to attract the admiration of poſterity, be always few, in all nations and all ages; 'tis impoſſible but a ſhare of the ſame ſpirit and genius muſt be antecedently diffuſed thro' the people among whom they ariſe, in order to produce, form, and cultivate, from their earlieſt infancy, the taſte and judgment of thoſe eminent writers. The maſs cannot be altogether inſipid, from which ſuch refined ſpirits are extracted. *There is a God within us*, ſays OVID, *who breathes that divine air by which we are animated* *. Poets, in all ages, have advanced this claim to inſpiration. There is not, however, any thing ſupernatural in the caſe. Their fire is not kindled from heaven. It only runs along the earth; is caught from one breaſt to another; and burns brighteſt, where the materials are beſt prepared, and moſt happily diſpoſed. The queſtion, therefore, concerning the riſe and progreſs of the arts and ſciences, is not altogether a queſtion concerning the taſte, genius, and ſpirit of a few, but concerning thoſe of a whole people; and may, therefore, be accounted for, in ſome meaſure, by general cauſes and principles. I grant, that a man, who ſhould inquire, why ſuch a particular poet, as HOMER, for inſtance, exiſted, at ſuch a place, in ſuch a time, would throw himſelf headlong into chimæra, and could never treat of ſuch a ſubject, without a multitude of falſe ſubtilties and refinements. He might as well pretend to give a reaſon, why ſuch particular generals, as FABIUS and SCIPIO, lived in ROME at ſuch a time, and why FABIUS came into the world before SCIPIO. For ſuch incidents as thoſe, no other reaſon can be given but that of HORACE.

* Eſt Deus in nobis; agitante caleſcimus illo:
Impetus hic, ſacræ ſemina mentis habet. OVID. *Faſt. Lib.* I.

Scit

Scit genius, natale comes, qui temperat aſtrum,
Naturæ Deus humanæ, mortalis in unum ——
—— *Quodque caput, vultu mutabilis, albus & ater.*

But I am perſuaded, that in many caſes very good reaſons might be given, why ſuch a nation is more polite and learned, at a particular time, than any of its neighbours. At leaſt, this is ſo curious a ſubject, that it were a pity to abandon it intirely, before we have found, whether it be ſuſceptible of reaſoning, and can be reduced to any general principles. I ſhall therefore proceed to deliver a few obſervations on this ſubject, which I ſubmit, with intire deference, to the cenſure and examination of the learned.

My firſt obſervation is, *That it is impoſſible for the arts and ſciences to ariſe, at firſt, among any people, unleſs that people enjoy the bleſſing of a free government.*

In the firſt ages of the world, when men are as yet barbarous and ignorant, they ſeek no farther ſecurity againſt mutual violence and injuſtice, than the choice of ſome rulers, few or many, in whom they place an implicite confidence, without providing any ſecurity, by laws or political inſtitutions, againſt the violence and injuſtice of theſe rulers. If the authority be centered in a ſingle perſon, and if the people either by conqueſt, or by the ordinary courſe of propagation, increaſe to a great multitude, the monarch, finding it impoſſible, in his own perſon, to execute every office of ſovereignty, in every place, muſt delegate his authority to inferior magiſtrates, who preſerve peace and order in their particular diſtricts. As experience and education have not yet refined the judgments of men to any conſiderable degree, the prince, who is himſelf unreſtrained, never dreams of reſtraining his miniſters, but delegates his full authority to every one, whom he ſets over any portion

tion of the people. All general laws are attended with inconveniencies, when applied to particular cases; and it requires great penetration and experience, both to perceive that these inconveniencies are fewer than what result from full discretionary powers in every magistrate; and also, to discern what general laws are, upon the whole, attended with fewest inconveniencies. This is a matter of so great difficulty, that men may have made some advances, even in the sublime arts of poetry and eloquence, where a rapidity of genius and imagination assists their progress, before they have arrived at any great refinement in their municipal laws, where frequent trials, and diligent observation, can alone direct their improvements. It is not, therefore, to be supposed, that a barbarous monarch, unrestrained and uninstructed, will ever become a legislator, or think of restraining his *Bashaws* in every province, or even his *Cadis* in every village. We are told, that the late *Czar*, tho' actuated with a noble genius, and smit with the love and admiration of EUROPEAN arts; yet professed an esteem for the TURKISH policy in this particular, and approved of such summary decisions of causes, as are practised in that barbarous monarchy, where the judges are not restrained by any methods, forms, or laws. He did not perceive, how contrary such a practice would have been to all his other endeavours for refining his people. Arbitrary power, in all cases, is somewhat oppressive and debasing; but 'tis altogether ruinous and intolerable, when contracted into a small compass; and becomes still worse, when the person, who possesses it, knows that the time of his authority is limited and uncertain. *Habet subjectos tanquam suos; viles, ut alienos* *. He governs the subjects with full authority, as if they were his own; and with negligence or tyranny, as belonging to another. A people governed after

* TACIT. Hist. lib. 1.

such

from a manner are slaves in the full and proper sense of the word; and 'tis impossible they can ever aspire to any refinements of taste or reason. They have not so much as pretence to enjoy the necessaries of life in plenty or security.

To expect, therefore, that the arts and sciences should take their first rise in a monarchy, is to expect a contradiction. Before these refinements have taken place, the monarch is ignorant and uninstructed; and not having knowledge sufficient to make him sensible of the necessity of basing his government upon general laws, he delegates his full powers to all inferior magistrates. This barbarous policy debases the people, and for ever prevents all improvement. Were it possible, that, before science was known in the world, a monarch could possess such wisdom as to become a legislator, and govern his people by law, not by the arbitrary will of their fellow subjects, it might be possible for that species of government to be the first nursery of arts and sciences. But in that supposition there seems to be a manifest contradiction.

It may happen, that a republic, in its infant state, may be supported by as few laws as a barbarous monarchy, and may entrust as unlimited an authority to its magistrates or judges. But, besides that the frequent elections of these magistrates by the people, are a considerable check upon their authority; 'tis impossible, but, in time, the necessity of restraining the magistrates, in order to preserve liberty, must at last appear, and give rise to general laws and statutes. The ROMAN Consuls, for some time, decided all causes, without being confined by any positive statutes, till the people, bearing this yoke with impatience, created the *decemvirs*, who promulgated the *twelve tables*; a body of laws, which, tho', perhaps, they were not equal in bulk to one ENGLISH act of parliament,

ment, were almoſt the only written rules which regulated property and puniſhment, for ſome ages, in that famous republic. They were, however, ſufficient, together with the forms of a free government, to ſecure the lives and properties of the citizens; to exempt one man from the dominion of another; and to protect every one againſt the violence or tyranny of his fellow citizens. In ſuch a ſituation the ſciences may raiſe their heads and flouriſh: But never can have being amidſt ſuch a ſcene of oppreſſion and ſlavery, as always reſults from barbarous monarchies, where the people alone are reſtrained by the authority of the magiſtrates, and the magiſtrates are not reſtrained by any law or ſtatute. An unlimited deſpotiſm of this nature, while it exiſts, effectually puts a ſtop to all improvements, and keeps men from attaining that knowledge, which is requiſite to inſtruct them in the advantages ariſing from a better police, and more moderate authority.

Here then are the advantages of republics. Tho' a republic ſhould be barbarous, it neceſſarily, by an infallible operation, gives riſe to LAW, even before mankind have made any conſiderable advances in the other ſciences. From law ariſes ſecurity: From ſecurity curioſity: And from curioſity knowledge. The latter ſteps of this progreſs may be more accidental; but the former are altogether neceſſary. A republic without laws can never have any duration. On the contrary, in a monarchical government, law ariſes not neceſſarily from the forms of government. Monarchy, when abſolute, contains even ſomething repugnant to law. Great wiſdom and reflexion can alone reconcile them. But ſuch a degree of wiſdom can never be expected, before the greater refinements and improvements of human reaſon. Theſe refinements require curioſity, ſecurity, and law. The *firſt* growth, therefore, of the arts and ſciences can never be expected in deſpotic governments.

According to the neceſſary progreſs of things, law muſt precede ſcience. In republics law may precede ſcience, and may ariſe from the very nature of the government. In monarchies it ariſes not from the nature of the government, and cannot precede ſcience. An abſolute prince, who is barbarous, renders all his miniſters and magiſtrates as abſolute as himſelf: And there needs no more to prevent, for ever, all induſtry, curioſity, and ſcience.

There are other cauſes which diſcourage the riſe of the refined arts in deſpotic governments; though I take the want of laws, and the delegation of full powers to every petty magiſtrate, to be the principal. Eloquence certainly ariſes more naturally in popular governments: Emulation too in every accompliſhment, muſt there be more animated and enlivened: And genius and capacity have a fuller ſcope and career. All theſe cauſes render free governments the only proper *nurſery* for the arts and ſciences.

The next obſervation which I ſhall make on this head, is, *That nothing is more favourable to the riſe of politeneſs and learning, than a number of neighbouring and independent ſtates connected together by commerce and policy.* The emulation, which naturally ariſes among thoſe neighbouring ſtates, is an obvious ſource of improvement: But what I would chiefly inſiſt on is the ſtop, which ſuch limited territories give both to *power* and to *authority*.

Extended governments, where a ſingle perſon has great influence, ſoon become deſpotic; but ſmall ones change naturally into commonwealths. A large government is accuſtomed by degrees to tyranny; becauſe each act of violence is at firſt performed upon a part, which, being diſtant from the majority, is not taken notice of, nor excites any violent ferment. Beſides, a large government, though the whole be diſcontented, may, by a

little art, be kept in obedience; while each part, ignorant of the reſolutions of the reſt, is afraid to begin any commotion or inſurrection. Not to mention, that there is a ſuperſtitious reverence for princes, which mankind naturally fall into when they do not often ſee the ſovereign, and when many of them become not acquainted with him ſo as to perceive his weakneſſes. And as large ſtates can afford a great expence, in order to ſupport the pomp of majeſty; this is a kind of faſcination on mankind, and naturally contributes to the enſlaving them.

In a ſmall government, any act of oppreſſion is immediately known through the whole: The murmurs and diſcontents, proceeding from it, are eaſily communicated: And the indignation riſes the higher, that the ſubjects are not apt to apprehend in ſuch ſtates, that the diſtance is very wide between themſelves and their ſovereign. "No "man," ſaid the Prince DE CONDE, "is a hero to his "*Valet de Chambre.*" 'Tis certain, that admiration and acquaintance are altogether incompatible towards any mortal creature. Sleep and love convinced even ALEXANDER himſelf that he was not a God: But I ſuppoſe that ſuch as attended him daily could eaſily, from the numberleſs weakneſſes to which he was ſubject, have given him many other ſtill more convincing proofs of his humanity.

But the diviſions into ſmall ſtates are favourable to learning, by ſtopping the progreſs of *authority* as well as that of *power*. Reputation is often as great a faſcination upon power as ſovereignty, and is equally deſtructive to the freedom of thought and examination. But where a number of neighbouring ſtates have a great intercourſe of arts and commerce, their mutual jealouſy keeps them from receiving too lightly the law from each other, in matters of taſte and of reaſoning, and makes them examine every work of art with the greateſt care and accu-

racy. The contagion of popular opinions ſpreads not ſo eaſily from one place to another. It readily receives a check in ſome ſtate or other, where it concurs not with the prevailing prejudices. And nothing but nature and reaſon, or at leaſt, what bears them a ſtrong reſemblance, can force its way through all obſtacles, and unite the moſt rival nations into an eſteem and admiration of it.

GREECE was a cluſter of little principalities, which ſoon became republics; and being united both by their near neighbourhood, and by the ties of the ſame language and intereſt, they entered into the cloſeſt intercourſe of commerce and learning. There concurred a happy climate, a ſoil not unfertile, and a moſt harmonious and comprehenſive language; ſo that every circumſtance among that people ſeemed to favour the riſe of the arts and ſciences. Each city produced its ſeveral artiſts and philoſophers, who refuſed to yield the preference to thoſe of the neighbouring republics: Their contentions and debates ſharpened the wits of men: A variety of objects was preſented to the judgment, while each challenged the preference to the reſt: And the ſciences, not being dwarfed by the reſtraint of authority, were enabled to make ſuch conſiderable ſhoots, as are, even at this time, the objects of our admiration. After the ROMAN *chriſtian*, or *catholic* church had ſpread itſelf over the civilized world, and had engroſſed all the learning of the times; being really one large ſtate within itſelf, and united under one head; this variety of ſects immediately diſappeared, and the PERIPATETIC philoſophy was alone admitted into all the ſchools, to the utter depravation of every kind of learning. But mankind, having at length thrown off this yoke, affairs are now turned nearly to the ſame ſituation as before, and EUROPE is at preſent a copy at large, of what GREECE was formerly a pattern in miniature. We have ſeen the advantage of this ſituation in ſeveral inſtan-

ces. What checked the progreſs of the CARTESIAN philoſophy, to which the FRENCH nation ſhewed ſuch a ſtrong propenſity towards the end of the laſt century, but the oppoſition made to it by the other nations of EUROPE, who ſoon diſcovered the weak ſides of that philoſophy? The ſevereſt ſcrutiny, which NEWTON's theory has undergone, proceeded not from his countrymen, but from foreigners; and if it can overcome the obſtacles which it meets with at preſent in all parts of EUROPE, it will probably go down triumphant to the lateſt poſterity. The ENGLISH are become ſenſible of the ſcandalous licentiouſneſs of their ſtage, from the example of the FRENCH decency and morals. The FRENCH are convinced, that their theatre has become ſomewhat effeminate, by too much love and gallantry; and begin to approve of the more maſculine taſte of ſome neighbouring nations.

In CHINA there ſeems to be a pretty conſiderable ſtock of politeneſs and ſcience, which, in the courſe of ſo many centuries, might naturally be expected to ripen into ſomething more perfect and finiſhed, than what has yet ariſen from them. But CHINA is one vaſt empire, ſpeaking one language, governed by one law, and ſympathizing in the ſame manners. The authority of any teacher, ſuch as CONFUCIUS, was propagated eaſily from one corner of the empire to another. None had courage to reſiſt the torrent of popular opinion. And poſterity were not bold enough to diſpute what had been univerſally received by their anceſtors. This ſeems to be one natural reaſon, why the ſciences have made ſo ſlow a progreſs in that mighty empire *.

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* If it be aſked how we can reconcile to the foregoing principles the happineſs, riches, and good police of the CHINESE, who have always been governed by a ſole monarch, and can ſcarce form an idea of a free government; I would anſwer, that tho' the CHINESE government be a pure monarchy, it

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If we conſider the face of the globe, EUROPE, of all the four parts of the world, is the moſt broken by ſeas, rivers, and mountains; and GREECE of all countries of EUROPE. Hence theſe regions were naturally divided into ſeveral diſtinct governments. And hence the ſciences aroſe in GREECE; and EUROPE has been hitherto the moſt conſtant habitation of them.

I have ſometimes been inclined to think, that interruptions in the periods of learning, were they not attended with ſuch a deſtruction of ancient books, and the records of hiſtory, would be rather favourable to the arts and ſciences, by breaking the progreſs of authority, and dethroning the tyrannical uſurpers over human reaſon. In this particular, they have the ſame influence, as interruptions in political governments and ſocieties. Conſider the blind ſubmiſſion of the ancient philoſophers to the ſeveral maſters in each ſchool, and you will be convinced, that no good could ever be expected from an hundred centuries of ſuch a ſervile philoſophy. Even the ECLECTICS, who aroſe about the age of AUGUSTUS, notwithſtanding their profeſſing to chuſe freely what pleaſed them from every different ſect, were yet, in the main,

is not, properly ſpeaking, abſolute. This proceeds from a peculiarity of the ſituation of that country: They have no neighbours, except the TARTARS, from whom they were, in ſome meaſure ſecured, at leaſt ſeemed to be ſecured, by their famous wall, and by the great ſuperiority of their numbers. By this means, military diſcipline has always been much neglected amongſt them; and their ſtanding forces are mere militia, of the worſt kind; and unfit to ſuppreſs any general inſurrection in countries ſo extremely populous. The ſword, therefore, may properly be ſaid to be always in the hands of the people, which is a ſufficient reſtraint upon the monarch, and obliges him to lay his *mandarins* or governors of provinces under the reſtraint of general laws, in order to prevent thoſe rebellions, which we learn from hiſtory to have been ſo frequent and dangerous in that government. Perhaps, a pure monarchy of this kind, were it fitted for a defence againſt foreign enemies, would be the beſt of all governments, as having both the tranquillity attending kingly power, and the moderation and liberty of popular aſſemblies.

as slavish and dependent as any of their brethren; since they sought for truth, not in nature, but in the several schools; where they supposed she must necessarily be found, though not united in a body, yet dispersed in parts. Upon the revival of learning, those sects of STOICS and EPICUREANS, PLATONISTS, and PYTHAGOREANS, could never regain any credit or authority; and, at the same time, by the example of their fall, kept men from submitting, with such blind deference, to those new sects, which have attempted to gain an ascendant over them.

The *third* observation, which I shall form on this head, of the rise and progress of the arts and sciences, is, *That though the only proper* Nursery *of these noble plants be a free government; yet they may be transplanted into any government; and that a republic is most favourable to the growth of the sciences, and a civilized monarchy to that of the polite arts.*

To balance a large state or society, whether monarchical or republican, on general laws, is a work of so great difficulty, that no human genius, however comprehensive, is able, by the mere dint of reason and reflection, to effect it. The judgments of many must unite in this work: Experience must guide their labour: Time must bring it to perfection: And the feeling of inconveniencies must correct the mistakes, which they inevitably fall into, in their first trials and experiments. Hence the impossibility appears, that this undertaking should be begun and carried on in any monarchy; since such a form of government, ere civilized, knows no other secret than policy, than that of entrusting unlimited powers in every governor or magistrate, and subdividing the people into so many classes and orders of slavery. From such a situation, no improvement can ever be expected in the sciences,

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in the liberal arts, in laws, and ſcarce in the manual arts and manufactures. The ſame barbariſm and ignorance, with which the government commences, is propagated to all poſterity, and can never come to a period by the efforts or ingenuity of ſuch unhappy ſlaves.

But tho' law, the ſource of all ſecurity and happineſs, ariſes late in any government, and is the ſlow product of order and of liberty, it is not preſerved with the ſame difficulty, with which it is produced; but when it has once taken root, is a hardy plant, which will ſcarce ever periſh thro' the ill culture of men, or the rigour of the ſeaſons. The arts of luxury, and much more the liberal arts, which depend on a refined taſte or ſentiment, are eaſily loſt; becauſe they are always reliſhed by a few only, whoſe leiſure, fortune, and genius fit them for ſuch amuſements. But what is profitable to every mortal, and in common life, when once diſcovered, can ſcarce ever periſh, but by the total ſubverſion of ſociety, and by ſuch furious inundations of barbarous invaders, as obliterate all memory of former arts and civility. Imitation alſo is apt to tranſport theſe coarſer and more uſeful arts from one climate to another, and make them precede the refined arts in their progreſs; though perhaps they ſprang after them in their firſt riſe and propagation. From theſe cauſes proceed civilized monarchies, where the arts of government, firſt invented in free ſtates, are preſerved to the mutual advantage and ſecurity of ſovereign and ſubject.

However perfect, therefore, the monarchical form may appear to ſome politicians, it owes all its perfection to the republican; nor is it poſſible, that a pure deſpotiſm, eſtabliſhed among a barbarous people, can ever, by its native force and energy, refine and poliſh itſelf. It muſt borrow its laws, and methods, and inſtitutions, and conſequently

ſequently its ſtability and order, from free governments. Theſe advantages are the ſole growth of republics. The extenſive deſpotiſm of a barbarous monarchy, by entering into the detail of the government, as well as into the principal points of adminiſtration, for ever prevents all ſuch improvements.

In a civilized monarchy, the prince alone is unreſtrained in the exerciſe of his authority, and poſſeſſes alone a power, which is not bounded by any thing but cuſtom, example, and the ſenſe of his own intereſt. Every miniſter or magiſtrate, however eminent, muſt ſubmit to the general laws, which govern the whole ſociety, and muſt exert the authority delegated to him after the manner, which is preſcribed. The people depend on none but their ſovereign, for the ſecurity of their property. He is ſo far removed from them, and is ſo much exempt from private jealouſies or intereſts, that this dependence is not felt. And thus a ſpecies of government ariſes, to which, in a high political rant, we may give the name of *Tyranny*, but which, by a juſt and prudent adminiſtration, may afford tolerable ſecurity to the people, and may anſwer moſt of the ends of political ſociety.

But tho' in a civilized monarchy, as well as in a republic, the people have ſecurity for the enjoyment of their property; yet in both theſe forms of government, thoſe who poſſeſs the ſupreme authority have the diſpoſal of many honours and advantages, which excite the ambition and avarice of mankind. The only difference is, that in a republic, the candidates for offices muſt look downwards, to gain the ſuffrages of the people; in a monarchy, they muſt turn their attention upwards, to court the good graces and favour of the great. To be ſucceſsful in the former way, 'tis neceſſary for a man to make himſelf

uſeful,

useful, by his industry, capacity, or knowledge: To be prosperous in the latter way, 'tis requisite for him to render himself *agreeable*, by his wit, complaisance, or civility. A strong genius succeeds best in republics: A refined taste in monarchies. And consequently the sciences are the more natural growth of the one, and the polite arts of the other.

Not to mention, that monarchies, receiving their chief stability from a superstitious reverence to priests and princes, have almost always abridged the liberty of reasoning, with regard to religion and politics, and consequently metaphysics and morals. All these form the most considerable branches of science. Mathematics and natural philosophy, which only remain, are not half so valuable.

There is a very great connection among all the arts, which contribute to pleasure; and the same delicacy of taste, which enables us to make improvements in one, will not allow the others to remain altogether rude and barbarous. Amongst all the arts of conversation, no one pleases more than mutual deference or civility, which leads us to resign our own inclinations to those of our companion, and to curb and conceal that presumption and arrogance so natural to the human mind. A good-natured man, who is well educated, practises this civility to every mortal without premeditation or interest. But, in order to render that valuable quality general among any people, it seems necessary to assist the natural disposition by some general motive. Where power rises upwards from the people to the great, as in all republics, such refinements of civility are apt to be little practised, since the whole state are, by that means, brought near to a level, and every member of it is rendered, in a great measure, independent of another. The people have the advantage, by the authority of their suffrages: The great,

great, by the superiority of their station. But in a civilized monarchy, there is a long train of dependence from the prince to the peasant, which is not great enough to render property precarious, or depress the minds of the people; but is sufficient to beget in every one an inclination to please his superiors, and to form himself upon those models, which are most acceptable to people of condition and education. Politeness of manners, therefore, arises most naturally in monarchies and courts; and where that flourishes, none of the liberal arts will be altogether neglected or despised.

The republics in EUROPE are at present noted for want of politeness. *The good manners of a* SWISS *civilized in* HOLLAND *, is an expression for rusticity among the FRENCH. The ENGLISH, in some degree, fall under the same censure, notwithstanding their learning and genius. And if the VENETIANS be an exception to the rule, they owe it, perhaps, to their communication with the other ITALIANS, most of whose governments beget a dependence more than sufficient for civilizing their manners.

'Tis difficult to pronounce any judgment concerning the refinements of the ancient republics in this particular: But I am apt to suspect, that the arts of conversation were not brought so near to perfection among them as the arts of writing and composition. The scurrility of the ancient orators, in many instances, is quite shocking, and exceeds all belief. Vanity too is often not a little offensive in authors of that age †; as well as the common

* C'est la politesse d' un Suisse
En HOLLANDE civilisé. ROUSSEAU.

† 'Tis needless to cite CICERO or PLINY on this head: They are too much noted: But one is a little surprised to find ARRIAN, a very grave, judicious writer, interrupt the thread of his narration all of a sudden, to tell his readers

common licentiouſneſs and immodeſty of their ſtile, *Qui-cunque impudicus, adulter, ganeo, manu, ventre, pene, bona patria laceraverat*, ſays SALLUST in one of the graveſt and moſt moral paſſages of his hiſtory. *Nam fuit ante Helenam Cunnus teterrima belli Cauſa*, is an expreſſion of HORACE, in tracing the origin of moral good and evil. OVID and LUCRETIUS * are almoſt as licentious in their ſtile as my Lord ROCHESTER; tho' the former were fine gentlemen and delicate writers, and the latter, from the corruptions of that court, in which he lived, ſeems to to have thrown off all regard to ſhame and decency. JUVENAL inculcates modeſty with great zeal; but ſets a very bad example of it, if we conſider the impudence of his expreſſions.

I ſhall alſo be ſo bold, as to affirm, That among the ancients, there was not much delicacy of breeding, or that polite deference and reſpect, which civility obliges us either to expreſs or counterfeit towards the perſons with whom we converſe. CICERO was certainly one of the politeſt gentlemen of his age; and yet I muſt confeſs I have frequently been ſhocked with the poor figure under which he repreſents his friend ATTICUS, in thoſe dialogues, where he himſelf is introduced as a ſpeaker. That learned and virtuous ROMAN, whoſe dignity, tho' he was only a private gentleman, was inferior to that of no one in ROME, is there ſhewn in rather a more pitiful light than PHILALETHES's friend in our modern dialogues. He is a humble admirer of the orator,

readers that he himſelf is as eminent among the GREEKS for eloquence as ALEXANDER was for arms. Lib. 1.

* This poet (See lib. 4. 1165) recommends a very extraordinary cure for love, and what one expects not to meet with in ſo elegant and philoſophical a poem. It ſeems to have been the original of ſome of Dr. SWIFT's beautiful and cleanly images. The elegant CATULLUS and PHÆDRUS fall under the ſame cenſure.

ſays

pays him frequent compliments, and receives his inſtructions, with all the deference a ſcholar owes to his maſter *. Even CATO is treated in ſomewhat a cavalier manner in the dialogues *de finibus*. And 'tis remarkable, that CICERO, being a great ſceptic in matters of religion, and unwilling to determine any thing on that head among the different ſects of philoſophy, introduces his friends diſputing concerning the being and nature of the gods, while he is only a hearer; becauſe, forſooth, it would have been an impropriety for ſo great a genius as himſelf, had he ſpoke, not to have ſaid ſomething deciſive on the ſubject, and have carried every thing before him, as he always does on other occaſions. There is alſo a ſpirit of dialogue obſerved in the eloquent books *de Oratore*, and a tolerable equality maintained among the ſpeakers: But then theſe ſpeakers are the great men of the age preceding the author, and he recounts the conference as only from hearſay.

One of the moſt particular details of a real dialogue, which we meet with in antiquity is related by POLYBIUS †, when PHILIP, king of MACEDON, a prince of wit and parts, met with TITUS FLAMININUS, one of the politeſt of the ROMANS as we learn from PLUTACRH ‡, accompanied with ambaſſadors from almoſt all the GREEK cities. The ÆTOLIAN ambaſſador very abruptly tells the king, that he talked like a fool or a madman (ληρειν) *That's evident*, ſays his majeſty, *even to a blind man*; which was a raillery on the blindneſs of his excellency. Yet all this paſt not the uſual bounds: For the conference was not diſturbed; and FLAMININUS

* ATT. Non mihi videtur ad beate vivendum ſatis eſſe virtutem. MAR. At hercule BRUTO meo videtur; cujus ego judicium, pace tua dixerim, longe antepono tuo. TUSC. Quæ. lib. 5.

† Lib. 17.

‡ In vita FLAMIN.

was

was very well diverted with theſe ſtrokes of humour. At the end, when PHILIP craved a little time to conſult with his friends, of whom he had none preſent, the ROMAN general, being deſirous alſo to ſhew his wit, as the hiſtorian ſays, tells him, *that perhaps the reaſon, why he had none of his friends with him, was becauſe he had murdered them all*; which was actually the caſe. This unprovoked piece of ruſticity is not condemned by the hiſtorian, cauſed no farther reſentment in PHILIP, than to excite a SARDONIAN ſmile, or what we call a grin, and hindered him not from renewing the conference next day. PLUTARCH * too mentions this raillery amongſt the witty and agreeable ſayings of FLAMININUS.

'Tis but an indifferent compliment, which HORACE pays to his friend GROSPHUS, in the ode addreſſed to him. *No one*, ſay he, *is happy in every reſpect. And I may perhaps enjoy ſome advantages, which you are deprived of. You poſſeſs great riches: Your bellowing herds cover the* SICILIAN *plains: Your chariot is drawn by the fineſt horſes: And you are arrayed in the richeſt purple. But the indulgent fates, with a ſmall inheritance, have given* ME *a fine genius, and have endowed me with a contempt for the malignant judgments of the vulgar* †. PHÆDRUS ſays to

* In vita FLAMIN.

† ——Nihil eſt ab omni
Parte beatum.
Abſtulit clarum cita mors ACHILLEM,
Longa TITHONUM minuit ſenectus,
Et mihi forſan, tibi quod negarit,
Porriget hora.
Te greges centum, Siculæque circum
Mugiunt vaccæ: tibi tollit, hinni-
Tum apta quadrigis equa: te bis Afro
Murice tinctæ
Veſtiunt lanæ: mihi parva rura, &
Spiritum Graiæ tenuem Camœnæ
Parca non mendax dedit & malignum
Spernere vulgus. Lib. 2. Ode 16.

his

his patron, EUTYCHUS, *If you intend to read my works, I ſhall be pleaſed: If not, I ſhall, at leaſt, have the advantage of pleaſing poſterity* *. I am apt to think that a modern poet would not have been guilty of ſuch an impropriety as that which may be obſerved in VIRGIL's addreſs to AUGUSTUS, when, after a great deal of extravagant flattery, and after having deified the emperor, according to the cuſtom of thoſe times, he, at laſt, places this god on the ſame level with himſelf. *By your gracious nod*, ſays he, *render my undertaking proſperous; and taking pity*, together with me, *of the Swains ignorant of huſbandry, beſtow your favourable influence on this work* †. Had men, in that age, been accuſtomed to obſerve ſuch niceties, a writer

* Quem ſi leges, lætabor; fin autem minus,
Habebunt certe quo ſe oblectent poſteri.

† Ignaroſque viæ *mecum* miſeratus agreſtes
Ingredere, & votis jam nunc aſſueſce vocari.

One would not ſay to a prince or great man, "When you and I were in "ſuch a place, we ſaw ſuch a thing happen." But, "When you were in "ſuch a place, I attended you: And ſuch a thing happened."

Here I cannot forbear mentioning a piece of delicacy obſerved in FRANCE, which ſeems to me exceſſive and ridiculous. You muſt not ſay, "That is "a very fine dog, Madam." But, "Madam, that is a very fine dog." They think it indecent that thoſe words, *dog* and *madam*, ſhould be coupled together in the ſentence; though they have no reference to each other in the ſenſe.

After all, I acknowledge, that this reaſoning from ſingle paſſages of ancient authors may ſeem fallacious; and that the foregoing arguments cannot have great force, but with thoſe who are well acquainted with theſe writers, and know the truth of the general poſition. For inſtance, what abſurdity would it be to aſſert, that VIRGIL underſtood not the force of the terms he employs, and could not chuſe his epithets with propriety? Becauſe in the following lines, addreſſed alſo to AUGUSTUS, he has failed in that particular, and has aſcribed to the INDIANS a quality, which ſeems, in a manner, to turn his hero into ridicule.

——— Et te maxime CÆSAR,
Qui nunc extremis ASIÆ jam victor in oris
Imbellem avertis ROMANIS arcibus Indum. Georg. Lib. 2.

ſo

ſo delicate as VIRGIL would certainly have given a different turn to this ſentence. The court of AUGUSTUS, however polite, had not yet, it ſeems, worn off the manners of the republic.

Cardinal WOLSEY apologized for his famous piece of inſolence, in ſaying, EGO ET REX MEUS, *I and my king*, by obſerving, that this expreſſion was exactly conformable to the *Latin* idiom, and that a ROMAN always named himſelf before the perſon to whom, or of whom he ſpake. Yet this ſeems to have been an inſtance of want of civility among that people. The ancients made it a rule, That the perſon of the greateſt dignity ſhould be mentioned firſt in the diſcourſe: inſomuch, that we find, the ſpring of a quarrel and jealouſy between the ROMANS and ÆTOLIANS, to have been a poet's naming the ÆTOLIANS before the ROMANS, in celebrating a victory gained by their united arms over the MACEDONIANS *. Thus LIVIA diſguſted TIBERIUS by placing her own name before his in an inſcription †.

No advantages in this world are pure and unmixed. In like manner, as modern politeneſs, which is naturally ſo ornamental, runs often into affectation and foppery and diſguiſe and inſincerity; ſo the ancient ſimplicity, which is naturally ſo amiable and affecting, often degenerates into ruſticity and abuſe, ſcurrility and obſcenity.

If the ſuperiority in politeneſs ſhould be allowed to modern times, the modern notions of *gallantry* and *honour*, the natural produce of courts and monarchies, will probably be aſſigned as the cauſes of this refinement. No one denies theſe inventions to be modern ‡: But

* PLUT. in vita FLAMININI.

† TACIT. Ann. lib. 3. cap. 64.

‡ In the *Self-Tormentor* of TERENCE, CLINIAS, whenever he comes to town, inſtead of waiting on his miſtreſs, ſends for her to come to him.

ſome of the moſt zealous partizans of the ancients, have aſſerted them to be foppiſh and ridiculous, and a reproach, rather than credit to the preſent age *. It may here be proper to examine this queſtion, with regard both to gallantry and honour. We ſhall begin with gallantry.

Nature has implanted in all living creatures an affection between the ſexes, which even in the fierceſt and moſt rapacious animals, is not merely confined to the ſatisfaction of the bodily appetite, but begets a friendſhip and mutual ſympathy, which runs thro' the whole tenor of their lives. Nay, even in thoſe ſpecies, where nature limits the indulgence of this appetite to one ſeaſon and to one object, and forms a kind of marriage or aſſociation between a ſingle male and female, there is yet a viſible complacency and benevolence, which extends farther, and mutually ſoftens the affections of the ſexes towards each other †. How much more muſt this have place in man, where the confinement of the appetite is not natural; but either is derived accidentally from ſome ſtrong charm of love, or ariſes from reflections on duty and convenience? Nothing, therefore, can proceed leſs from affectation than the paſſion of gallantry. 'Tis *natural* in the higheſt degree. Art and education, in the moſt elegant courts, make no more alteration on it, than on all the other laudable paſſions. They only turn the

* My Lord SHAFTESBURY, ſee his *Moraliſts*.

† Tutti gli altri animai, che ſono in terra,
O che vivon quieti & ſtanno in pace;
O ſe vengon a riſſa, & ſi fan guerra,
A la femina il maſchio non la face.
L' orſa con l' orſo al boſco ſicura erra,
La Leoneſſa appreſſo il Leon giace,
Con Lupo vive il Lupa ſicura.
Ne la Giovenca ha del Torel paura.

ARIOSTO, Canto 5.

mind

mind more towards it; they refine it; they poliſh it; and give it a proper grace and expreſſion.

But gallantry is as *generous* as it is *natural*. To correct ſuch groſs vices, as lead us to commit a real injury to others, is the part of morals, and the object of the moſt ordinary education. Where *that* is not attended to, in ſome degree, no human ſociety can ſubſiſt. But in order to render converſation, and the intercourſe of minds more eaſy and agreeable, Good-manners have been invented, and have carried the matter ſomewhat farther. Wherever nature has given the mind a propenſity to any vice, or to any paſſion diſagreeable to others, refined breeding has taught men to throw the biaſs on the oppoſite ſide, and to preſerve, in all their behaviour, the appearance of ſentiments contrary to thoſe which they naturally incline to. Thus, as we are commonly proud and ſelfiſh, and apt to aſſume the preference above others, a polite man learns to behave with deference towards thoſe with whom he converſes, and to yield the ſuperiority to them in all the common incidents of ſociety. In like manner, wherever a perſon's ſituation may naturally beget any diſagreeable ſuſpicion in him, 'tis the part of good-manners to prevent it, by a ſtudied diſplay of ſentiments, directly contrary to thoſe of which he is apt to be jealous. Thus, old men know their infirmities, and naturally dread contempt from the youth: Hence, well-educated youth, redouble the inſtances of reſpect and deference to their elders. Strangers and foreigners are without protection: Hence, in all polite countries, they receive the higheſt civilities, and are intitled to the firſt place in every company. A man is lord in his own family, and his gueſts are, in a manner, ſubject to his authority: Hence, he is always the loweſt perſon in the company; attentive to the wants of every one; and giving himſelf all the trouble, in order to pleaſe, which may

not betray too visible an affectation, or impose too much constraint on his guests *. Gallantry is nothing but an instance of the same generous and refined attention. As nature has given *man* the superiority above *woman*, by endowing him with greater strength both of mind and body; 'tis his part to alleviate that superiority, as much as possible, by the generosity of his behaviour, and by a studied deference and complaisance for all her inclinations and opinions. Barbarous nations display this superiority, by reducing their females to the most abject slavery; by confining them, by beating them, by selling them, by killing them. But the male sex, among a polite people, discover their authority in a more generous, tho' not a less evident manner; by civility, by respect, by complaisance, and, in a word, by gallantry. In good company, you need not ask, Who is the master of the feast? The man who sits in the lowest place, and who is always industrious in helping every one, is most certainly the person. We must either condemn all such instances of generosity, as foppish and affected, or admit of gallantry among the rest. The ancient MUSCOVITES wedded their wives with a whip, instead of a wedding-ring. The same people, in their own houses, took always the precedency above foreigners, even † foreign ambassadors. These two instances of their generosity and politeness are much of a piece.

Gallantry is not less consistent with *wisdom* and *prudence*, than with *nature* and *generosity*; and when under

* The frequent mention in ancient authors of that ill-bred custom of the master of the family's eating better bread or drinking better wine at table, than he afforded his guests, is but an indifferent mark of the civility of those ages. See JUVENAL. sat. 5. PLINII, lib. 14. cap. 13. Also PLINII *Epist. Lucian de mercede conductis, Saturnalia*, &c. There is scarce any part of EUROPE at present so uncivilized as to admit of such a custom.

† See *Relation of three Embassies*, by the Earl of CARLISLE.

proper

proper regulations, contributes more than any other invention, to the *entertainment* and *improvement* of the youth of both ſexes. In all vegetables, 'tis obſervable, that the flower and the ſeed are always connected together; and in like manner, among every ſpecies of animals, nature has founded on the love between the ſexes their ſweeteſt and beſt enjoyment. But the ſatisfaction of the bodily appetite is not alone of great value; and even among brute creatures, we find, that their play and dalliance, and other expreſſions of fondneſs, form the greateſt part of the entertainment. In rational beings, we muſt certainly admit the mind for a conſiderable ſhare. Were we to rob the feaſt of all its garniture of reaſon, diſcourſe, ſympathy, friendſhip, and gaiety, what remains would ſcarce be worth acceptance, in the judgment of the truly elegant and luxurious.

What better ſchool for manners, than the company of virtuous women; where the mutual endeavour to pleaſe muſt inſenſibly poliſh the mind, there the example of the female ſoftneſs and modeſty muſt communicate itſelf to their admirers, and where the delicacy of that ſex puts every one on his guard, leſt he give offence by any breach of decency?

I muſt confeſs, That my own particular choice rather leads me to prefer the company of a few ſelect companions, with whom I can, calmly and peaceably, enjoy the feaſt of reaſon, and try the juſtneſs of every reflection, whether gay or ſerious, that may occur to me. But as ſuch a delightful ſociety is not every day to be met with, I muſt think, that mixt companies, without the fair-ſex, are the moſt inſipid entertainment in the world, and deſtitute of gaiety and politeneſs, as much as of ſenſe and reaſon. Nothing can keep them from exceſſive dulneſs but hard drinking; a remedy worſe than the diſeaſe.

Among the ancients, the character of the fair-sex was considered as altogether domestic, nor were they regarded as part of the polite world, or of good company. This, perhaps, is the true reason why the ancients have not left us one piece of pleasantry, that is excellent, (unless one may except the banquet of XENOPHON, and the dialogues of LUCIAN) though many of their serious compositions are altogether inimitable. HORACE condemns the coarse railleries and cold jests of PLAUTUS: But, tho' the most easy, agreeable, and judicious writer in the world, is his own talent for ridicule very striking or refined? This, therefore, is one considerable improvement, which the polite arts have received from gallantry, and from courts, where it first arose.

The point of *honour*, or duelling, is a modern invention, as well as *gallantry*; and by some esteemed equally useful for the refining of manners: But how it has contributed to that effect, I am at a loss to determine. Conversation, among the greatest rustics, is not commonly infested with such rudeness as can give occasion to duels, even according to the most refined laws of this fantastic honour; and as to the other small indecencies, which are the most offensive, because the most frequent, they can never be cured by the practice of duelling. But these notions are not only *useless*: They are also *pernicious*. By separating the man of honour from the man of virtue, the greatest profligates have got something to value themselves upon, and have been able to keep themselves in countenance, tho' guilty of the most shameful and most dangerous vices. They are debauchees, spendthrifts, and never pay a a farthing they owe: But they are men of honour; and therefore are to be received as gentlemen in all companies.

There

There are ſome of the parts of modern honour, which are the moſt eſſential parts of morality; ſuch as fidelity, the obſerving promiſes, and telling truth. Theſe points of honour Mr. ADDISON had in his eye when he made JUBA ſay,

Honour's a ſacred tye, the law of kings,
The noble mind's diſtinguiſhing perfection,
That aids and ſtrengthens virtue when it meets her,
And imitates her actions where ſhe is not:
It ought not to be ſported with.

Theſe lines are very beautiful: But I am afraid, that Mr. ADDISON has here been guilty of that impropriety of ſentiment, with which, on other occaſions, he has ſo juſtly reproached our poets. The ancients certainly never had any notion of *honour* as diſtinct from *virtue.*

But, to return from this digreſſion, I ſhall advance it as a *fourth* obſervation on this, of the riſe and progreſs of the arts and ſciences, *That when the arts and ſciences come to perfection in any ſtate, from that moment they naturally, or rather neceſſarily decline, and ſeldom or never revive in that nation, where they formerly flouriſhed.*

It muſt be confeſſed, that this maxim, though conformable to experience, may, at firſt ſight, be eſteemed very contrary to reaſon. If the natural genius of mankind be the ſame in all ages, and in almoſt all countries, (as I am of opinion it is) it muſt very much forward and cultivate this genius, to be poſſeſſed of exact patterns in every art, which may regulate the taſte, and fix the objects of imitation. The models left us by the ancients gave birth to all the arts about 200 years ago, and have mightily advanced their progreſs in every country of Eu-

ROPE: Why had they not a like effect during the reign of TRAJAN and his ſucceſſors, when they were much more entire, and were ſtill admired and ſtudied by the whole world? So late as the emperor JUSTINIAN, the POET, by way of diſtinction, was underſtood, among the GREEKS, to be HOMER; among the ROMANS, VIRGIL. Such admiration ſtill remained for theſe divine geniuſes; though no poet had appeared for many centuries, who could juſtly pretend to have imitated them.

A man's genius is always, in the beginning of his life, as much unknown to himſelf as to others, and 'tis only after frequent trials, attended with ſucceſs, that he dares think himſelf equal to thoſe undertakings, in which they who have ſucceeded, have fixed the admiration of mankind. If his own nation be already poſſeſſed of many models of eloquence, he naturally compares his own juvenile exerciſes with theſe; and being ſenſible of the infinite diſproportion between them, is diſcouraged from any further attempts, and never aims at a rivalſhip with thoſe authors, whom he ſo much admires. A noble emulation is the ſource of every excellence. Admiration and modeſty naturally extinguiſh this emulation. And no one is ſo liable to an exceſs of admiration and modeſty, as a truly great genius.

Next to emulation, the greateſt encourager of the noble arts is praiſe and glory. A writer is animated with new force, when he hears the applauſes of the world for his former productions; and, being rouſed by ſuch a motive, he often reaches a pitch of perfection, which is equally ſurprizing to himſelf and to his readers. But when the poſts of honour are all occupied, his firſt attempts are but coldly received by the public; being compared to productions, which are both in themſelves

more excellent, and have already the advantage of an eſtabliſhed reputation. Were MOLIERE and CORNEILLE to bring upon the ſtage at preſent their early productions, which were formerly ſo well received, it would diſcourage the young poets, to ſee the indifference and diſdain of the public. The ignorance of the age alone could have given admiſſion to the *Prince of* TYRE; but 'tis to that we owe *the Moor:* Had *Every man in his humour* been rejected, we had never ſeen VOLPONE.

Perhaps it may not be for the advantage of any nation, to have the arts imported from their neighbours in too great perfection. This extinguiſhes emulation, and ſinks the ardor of the generous youth. So many models of ITALIAN painting brought into BRITAIN, inſtead of exciting our artiſts, is the cauſe of their ſmall progreſs in that noble art. The ſame, perhaps, was the caſe of ROME, when it received the arts from GREECE. That multitude of polite productions in the FRENCH language, diſperſed all over GERMANY and the NORTH, hinder theſe nations from cultivating their own language, and keep them ſtill dependent on their neighbours for thoſe elegant entertainments.

'Tis true, the ancients had left us models in every kind of writing, which are highly worthy of admiration. But beſides that they were wrote in languages, which were known only to the learned; beſides this, I ſay, the compariſon is not ſo perfect nor intire between modern wits, and thoſe who lived in ſo remote an age. Had WALLER been born in ROME, during the reign of TIBERIUS, his firſt productions had been deſpiſed, when compared to the finiſhed odes of HORACE. But in this iſland the ſuperiority of the ROMAN poet diminiſhed nothing from the fame of the ENGLISH. We eſteemed

esteemed ourselves sufficiently happy, that our climate and language could produce but a faint copy of so excellent an original.

In short, the arts and sciences, like some plants, require a fresh soil; and however rich the land may be, and however you may recruit it by art or care, it will never, when once exhausted, produce any thing that is perfect or finished in the kind.

ESSAY

ESSAY XV.

The EPICUREAN *.

'TIS a great mortification to the vanity of man, that his utmoſt art and induſtry can never equal the meaneſt of nature's productions, either for beauty or value. Art is only the underworkman, and is employed to give a few ſtrokes of embelliſhment to thoſe pieces, which come from the hand of the maſter. Some of the drapery may be of his drawing; but he is not allowed to touch the principal figure. Art may make a ſuit of clothes: But nature muſt produce a man.

Even in thoſe productions, which are commonly denominated works of art, we find that the nobleſt of the kind are beholden for their chief beauty to the force and happy influence of nature. To the *Oeſtrum* or native enthuſiaſm of the poets, we owe whatever is admirable in their productions. The greateſt genius, where nature at any time fails him (for ſhe is not equal) throws aſide the lyre, and hopes not, from the rules of art, to reach that divine harmony, which muſt proceed from her inſpiration

* Or, *The man of elegance and pleaſure.* The intention of this and the three following eſſays is not ſo much, to explain accurately the ſentiments of the ancient ſects of philoſophy, as to deliver the ſentiments of ſects, that naturally form themſelves in the world, and entertain different ideas of human life and of happineſs. I have given each of them the name of the philoſophical ſect, to which it bears the greateſt affinity.

alone.

alone. How poor are thoſe ſongs, where a happy flow of fancy has not furniſhed materials for art to embelliſh and refine!

But of all the fruitleſs attempts of art, no one is ſo ridiculous, as that which the ſevere philoſophers have undertaken, the producing an *artificial happineſs*, and making us be pleaſed by rules of reaſon, and by reflection. Why did none of them claim the reward, which XERXES promiſed to him, who could invent a new pleaſure? Unleſs, perhaps, they invented ſo many pleaſures for their own uſe, that they deſpiſed riches, and ſtood in no need of any enjoyments, which the rewards of that monarch could procure them. I am apt, indeed, to think, that they were not willing to furniſh the PERSIAN court with a new pleaſure, by preſenting it with ſo new and unuſual an object of ridicule. Their ſpeculations, when confined to theory, and gravely delivered in the ſchools of GREECE, might excite admiration in their ignorant pupils: But the attempting to reduce ſuch principles to practice would ſoon have betrayed their abſurdity.

You pretend to make me happy by reaſon, and by rules of art. You muſt, then, create me anew by rules of art. For on my original frame and ſtructure does my happineſs depend. But you want power to effect this; and ſkill too, I am afraid: Nor can I entertain a leſs opinion of nature's wiſdom than of yours. And let her conduct the machine, which ſhe has ſo wiſely framed. I find, that I ſhould only ſpoil it by my tampering.

To what purpoſe ſhould I pretend to regulate, refine, or invigorate any of thoſe ſprings or principles, which nature has implanted in me? Is this the road by which I muſt reach happineſs? But happineſs implies eaſe, contentment, repoſe, and pleaſure; not watchfulneſs, care, and

and fatigue. The health of my body conſiſts in the facility with which all its operations are performed. The ſtomach digeſts the aliments: The heart circulates the blood: The brain ſeparates and refines the ſpirits: And all this without my concerning myſelf in the matter. When by my will alone I can ſtop the blood, as it runs with impetuoſity along its canals, then may I hope to change the courſe of my ſentiments and paſſions. In vain ſhould I ſtrain my faculties, and endeavour to receive pleaſure from an object, which is not fitted by nature to affect my organs with delight. I may give myſelf pain by my fruitleſs endeavours, but ſhall never reach any pleaſure.

Away then with all thoſe vain pretences of making ourſelves happy within ourſelves, of feaſting on our own thoughts, of being ſatisfied with the conſciouſneſs of well-doing, and of deſpiſing all aſſiſtance and all ſupplies from external objects. This is the voice of PRIDE, not of NATURE. And it were well, if even this pride could ſupport itſelf, and communicate a real *inward* pleaſure, however melancholy or ſevere. But this impotent pride can do no more than regulate the *outſide*; and with infinite pains and attention compoſe the language and countenance to a philoſophical dignity, in order to deceive the ignorant vulgar. The heart, mean while, is empty of all enjoyment: And the mind, unſupported by its proper objects, ſinks into the deepeſt ſorrow and dejection. Miſerable, but vain mortal! Thy mind be happy within itſelf! With what reſources is it endowed to fill ſo immenſe a void, and ſupply the place of all thy bodily ſenſes and faculties? Can thy head ſubſiſt without thy other members? In ſuch a ſituation,

What fooliſh figure muſt it make?
Do nothing elſe but ſleep *and* ake.

Into

Into such a lethargy, or such a melancholy, must thy mind be plunged, when deprived of foreign occupations and enjoyments.

Keep me, therefore, no longer in this violent constraint. Confine me not within myself; but point out to me those objects and pleasures, which afford the chief enjoyment. But why do I apply to you, proud and ignorant sages, to shew me the road to happiness? Let me consult my own passions and inclinations. In them must I read the dictates of nature; not in your frivolous discourses.

But see, propitious to my wishes, the divine, the amiable PLEASURE *, the supreme Love of GODS and men, advances towards me. At her approach, my heart beats with genial heat, and every sense and every faculty is dissolved in joy; while she pours around me all the embellishments of the spring, and all the treasures of the autumn. The melody of her voice charms my ears with the softest music, as she invites me to partake of those delicious fruits, which with a smile that diffuses a glory on the heavens and the earth, she presents to me. The sportive CUPIDS, who attend her, or fan me with their odoriferous wings, or pour on my head the most fragrant oils, or offer me their sparkling nectar in golden goblets. O! for ever let me spread my limbs on this bed of roses, and thus, thus feel the delicious moments, with soft and downy steps, glide along. But cruel chance! Whither do you fly so fast? Why do my ardent wishes, and that load of pleasures, under which you labour, rather hasten than retard your unrelenting pace? Suffer me to enjoy this soft repose, after all my fatigues in search of happiness. Suffer me to satiate myself with these de-

* *Dia voluptas.* LUCRET.

licacies,

licacies, after the pains of ſo long and ſo fooliſh an abſtinence.

But it will not do. The roſes have loſt their hue: The fruit its flavour: And that delicious wine, whoſe fumes, ſo late, intoxicated all my ſenſes with ſuch delight, now ſolicits in vain the fated palate. *Pleaſure* ſmiles at my languor. She beckens her ſiſter, *Virtue*, to come to her aſſiſtance. The gay, the frolic *Virtue* obſerves the call, and brings along the whole troop of my jovial friends. Welcome, thrice welcome, my ever dear companions, to theſe ſhady bowers, and to this luxurious repaſt. Your preſence has reſtored to the roſe its hue, and to the fruit its flavour. The vapours of this ſprightly nectar now again play around my heart; while you partake of my delights, and diſcover in your chearful looks, the pleaſure which you receive from my happineſs and ſatisfaction. The like do I receive from yours; and encouraged by your joyous preſence, ſhall again renew the feaſt, with which, from too much enjoyment, my ſenſes were well nigh fated; while the mind kept not pace with the body, nor afforded relief to her over-burthened partner.

In our chearful diſcourſes, better than in the formal reaſonings of the ſchools, is true wiſdom to be found. In our friendly endearments, better than in the hollow debates of ſtateſmen and pretended patriots, does true virtue diſplay itſelf. Forgetful of the paſt, ſecure of the future, let us here enjoy the preſent; and while we yet poſſeſs a being, let us fix ſome good, beyond the power of fate or fortune. To-morrow will bring its own pleaſures along with it: Or ſhould it diſappoint our fond wiſhes, we ſhall at leaſt enjoy the pleaſure of reflecting on the pleaſures of to-day.

Fear not, my friends, that the barbarous diſſonance of BACCHUS, and of his revellers, ſhould break in upon

this entertainment, and confound us with their turbulent and clamorous pleaſures. The ſprightly muſes wait around; and with their charming ſymphony, ſufficient to ſoften the wolves and tygers of the ſavage deſert, inſpire a ſoft joy into every boſom. Peace, harmony, and concord reign in this retreat; nor is the ſilence ever broke but by the muſic of our ſongs, or the chearful accents of our friendly voices.

But hark! the favourite of the muſes, the gentle DAMON, ſtrikes the lyre; and while he accompanies its harmonious notes with his more harmonious ſong, he inſpires us with the ſame happy debauch of fancy, by which he is himſelf tranſported. "Ye happy youth," he ſings, "Ye favoured of heaven *, while the wanton ſpring "pours upon you all her blooming honours, let not "*glory* ſeduce you, with her deluſive blaze, to paſs in "perils and dangers this delicious ſeaſon, this prime of "life. Wiſdom points out to you the road to pleaſure: "Nature too beckons you to follow her in that ſmooth "and flowery path. Will you ſhut your ears to their "commanding voice? Will you harden your heart to "their ſoft allurements? Oh, deluded mortals, thus to "loſe your youth, thus to throw away ſo invaluable a "preſent, to trifle with ſo periſhing a bleſſing. Con"template well your recompence. Conſider that glory, "which ſo allures your proud hearts, and ſeduces you "with your own praiſes. 'Tis an echo, a dream, nay "the ſhadow of a dream, which is diſſipated by every "wind, and loſt by every contrary breath of the igno"rant and ill-judging multitude. You fear not, that "even death itſelf ſhall raviſh it from you. But be-

* An imitation of the SYRENS ſong in TASSO.
" O Giovinetti, mentre APRILE & MAGGIO
" V' ammantan di fiorité & vegde ſpoglie," &c.
Gieruſalemme liberata, *Canto* 14.

"hold!

" hold! while you are yet alive, calumny bereaves you " of it; ignorance neglects it; nature enjoys it not; " fancy alone, renouncing every pleasure, receives this " airy recompence, empty and unstable as herself."

Thus the hours pass unperceived along, and lead in their wanton train all the pleasures of sense, and all the joys of harmony and friendship. Smiling *innocence* closes the procession; and while she presents herself to our ravished eyes, she embellishes the whole scene, and renders the view of these pleasures as transporting, after they have past us, as when, with laughing countenances, they were yet advancing towards us.

But the sun has sunk below the horizon; and darkness stealing silently upon us, has now buried all nature in an universal shade. " Rejoice, my friends, continue " your repast, or change it for soft repose. Tho' absent, " your joy or your tranquillity shall still be mine." *But whither do you go? Or what new pleasures call you from our society? Is there aught agreeable without your friends? And can aught please, in which we partake not?* " Yes, " my friends; the joy, which I now seek, admits not " of your participation. Here alone I wish your ab- " sence: And here alone can I find a sufficient compen- " sation for the loss of your society."

But I have not advanced far thro' the shades of the thick wood, which spreads a double night around me, ere, methinks, I perceive thro' the gloom, the charming CÆLIA, the mistress of my wishes, who wanders impatient thro' the grove, and preventing the appointed hour, silently chides my tardy steps. But the joy, which she receives from my presence, best pleads my excuse; and dissipating every anxious and every angry thought, leave room for nought but mutual joy and rapture. With what words, my fair one, shall I express my tenderness,

or deſcribe the emotions which now warm my tranſported boſom! Words are too faint to deſcribe my love; and if, alas! you feel not the ſame flame within you, in vain ſhall I endeavour to convey to you a juſt conception of it. But your every word and every motion ſuffice to remove this doubt; and while they expreſs your paſſion, ſerve alſo to enflame mine. How amiable this ſolitude, this ſilence, this darkneſs! No objects now importune the raviſhed ſoul. The thought, the ſenſe, all full of nothing but our mutual happineſs, wholly poſſeſs the mind, and convey a pleaſure, which deluded mortals vainly ſeek for in every other enjoyment. ——

But why does your boſom heave with theſe ſighs, while tears bathe your glowing cheeks? Why diſtract your heart with ſuch vain anxieties? Why ſo often aſk me, *How long my love ſhall yet endure?* Alas, my CÆLIA, can I reſolve this queſtion? *Do I know how long my life ſhall yet endure?* But does this alſo diſturb your tender breaſt? And is the image of our frail mortality for ever preſent with you, to throw a damp on your gayeſt hours, and poiſon even thoſe joys which love inſpires? Conſider rather, that if life be frail, if youth be tranſitory, we ſhould well employ the preſent moment, and loſe no part of ſo periſhable an exiſtence. Yet a little moment and *theſe* ſhall be no more. We ſhall be, as if we had never been. Not a memory of us be left upon earth; and even the fabulous ſhades below will not afford us a habitation. Our fruitleſs anxieties, our vain projects, our uncertain ſpeculations ſhall all be ſwallowed up and loſt. Our preſent doubts, concerning the original cauſe of all things, muſt never, alas! be reſolved. This alone we may be certain of, that if any governing mind preſide over the univerſe, he muſt be pleaſed to ſee us fulfil the ends of our being, and enjoy that pleaſure, for which

alone we were created. Let this reflection give eaſe to your anxious thoughts; but render not your joys too ſerious, by dwelling for ever upon it. 'Tis ſufficient, once, to be acquainted with this philoſophy, in order to give an unbounded looſe to love and jollity, and remove all the ſcruples of a vain ſuperſtition: But while youth and paſſion, my fair-one, prompt our eager deſires, we muſt find gayer ſubjects of diſcourſe, to intermix with theſe amorous careſſes.

ESSAY XVI.

The STOIC †.

THERE is this obvious and material difference in the conduct of nature, with regard to man and other animals, that having endowed the former with a ſublime celeſtial ſpirit, and having given him an affinity with ſuperior beings, ſhe allows not ſuch noble faculties to lie lethargic or idle; but urges him, by neceſſity, to employ, on every emergence, his utmoſt *art* and *induſtry*. Brute creatures have many of their neceſſities ſupplied by nature, being cloathed and armed by this beneficent parent of all things: And where their own *induſtry* is requiſite on any occaſion, nature, by implanting inſtincts, ſtill ſupplies them with the *art*, and guides them to their good, by her unerring precepts. But man, expoſed naked and indigent to the rude elements, riſes ſlowly from that helpleſs ſtate, by the care and vigilance of his parents; and having attained his utmoſt growth and perfection, reaches only a capacity of ſubſiſting, by his own care and vigilance. Every thing is ſold to ſkill and labour; and where nature furniſhes the materials, they are ſtill rude and unfiniſhed, till induſtry, ever active and intelligent, refines them from their brute ſtate, and fits them for human uſe and convenience.

† Or the man of action and virtue.

Acknowlege, therefore, O man, the beneficence of nature: For ſhe has given thee that intelligence which ſupplies all thy neceſſities. But let not indolence, under the falſe appearance of gratitude, perſuade thee to reſt contented with her preſents. Wouldeſt thou return to the raw herbage for thy food, to the open ſky for thy covering, and to ſtones and clubs for thy defence againſt the ravenous animals of the deſert? Then return alſo to thy ſavage manners, to thy timorous ſuperſtition, to thy brutal ignorance; and ſink thyſelf below thoſe animals, whoſe condition thou admireſt, and wouldeſt ſo fondly imitate.

Thy kind parent, nature, having given thee art and intelligence, has filled the whole globe with materials for theſe talents to work upon: Hearken to her voice, which ſo plainly tells thee, that thou thyſelf ſhouldeſt alſo be the object of thy induſtry, and that by art and attention thou canſt alone acquire that ability, which will raiſe thee to thy proper ſtation in the univerſe. Behold this artizan, who converts a rude and ſhapeleſs ſtone into a noble metal; and molding that metal by his cunning hands, creates, as it were by magic, every weapon for his defence, and every utenſil for his convenience. He has not this ſkill from nature: Uſe and practice have taught it him: And if thou wouldeſt emulate his ſucceſs, thou muſt follow his laborious footſteps.

But while thou *ambitiouſly* aſpireſt to the perfecting thy bodily powers and faculties, wouldeſt thou *meanly* neglect thy mind, and from a prepoſterous ſloth, leave it ſtill rude and uncultivated, as it came from the hands of nature? Far be ſuch folly and negligence from every rational being. If nature has been frugal in her gifts and endowments, there is the more need of art to ſupply her defects. If ſhe has been generous and liberal, know that ſhe

ſhe ſtill expects induſtry and application on our part, and revenges herſelf in proportion to our negligent ingratitude. The richeſt genius, like the moſt fertile ſoil, when uncultivated, ſhoots up into the rankeſt weeds; and inſtead of vines and olives for the pleaſure and uſe of man, produces, to its ſlothful owner, the moſt abundant crop of poiſons.

The great end of all human induſtry, is the attainment of happineſs. For this were arts invented, ſciences cultivated, laws ordained, and ſocieties modelled, by the profoundeſt wiſdom of patriots and legiſlators. Even the lonely ſavage, who lies expoſed to the inclemency of the elements, and the fury of wild beaſts, forgets not, for a moment, this grand object of his being. Ignorant as he is of every art of life, he keeps ſtill in view the end of all thoſe arts, and eagerly ſeeks for felicity amidſt that darkneſs with which he is environed. But as much as the wildeſt ſavage is inferior to the poliſhed citizen, who, under the protection of laws, enjoys every convenience which induſtry has invented; ſo much is this citizen himſelf inferior to the man of virtue, and the true philoſopher, who governs his appetites, ſubdues his paſſions, and has learned, from reaſon, to ſet a juſt value on every purſuit and enjoyment. For is there an art and apprenticeſhip neceſſary for every other attainment? And is there no art of life, no rule, no precepts to direct us in this principal concern? Can no particular pleaſure be attained without ſkill; and can the whole be regulated without reflection or intelligence, by the blind guidance of appetite and inſtinct? Surely then no miſtakes are ever committed in this affair; but every man, however diſſolute and negligent, proceeds in the purſuit of happineſs, with as unerring a motion, as that which the celeſtial bodies obſerve, when, conducted by the hand of the Almighty, they roll along the ethereal

plains. But if miſtakes be often, be inevitably committed, let us regiſter theſe miſtakes; let us conſider their cauſes; let us weigh their importance; let us inquire for their remedies. When from this we have fixed all the rules of conduct, we are *philoſophers:* When we have reduced theſe rules to practice, we are *ſages.*

Like many ſubordinate artiſts, employed to form the ſeveral wheels and ſprings of a machine: Such are thoſe who excel in all the particular arts of life. *He* is the maſter workman who puts thoſe ſeveral parts together, moves them according to juſt harmony and proportion, and produces true felicity as the reſult of their conſpiring order.

While thou haſt ſuch an alluring object in view, ſhall that labour and attention, which is requiſite to the attaining thy end, ever ſeem burdenſome and intolerable? Know, that this labour itſelf is the chief ingredient of the felicity to which thou aſpireſt, and that every enjoyment ſoon becomes inſipid and diſtaſteful, when not acquired by fatigue and induſtry. See the hardy hunters riſe from their downy couches, ſhake off the ſlumbers which ſtill weigh down their heavy eye-lids, and, ere *Aurora* has yet covered the heavens with her flaming mantle, haſten to the foreſt. They leave behind, in their own houſes, and in the neighbouring plains, animals of every kind, whoſe fleſh furniſhes the moſt delicious fare, and which offer themſelves to the fatal ſtroke. Laborious man diſdains ſo eaſy a purchaſe. He ſeeks for a prey, which hides itſelf from his ſearch, or flies from his purſuit, or defends itſelf from his violence. Having exerted in the chace every paſſion of the mind, and every member of the body, he then finds the charms of repoſe, and with joy compares its pleaſures to thoſe of his engaging labours.

And

And can vigorous induſtry give pleaſure to the purſuit even of the moſt worthleſs prey, which frequently eſcapes our toils? And cannot the ſame induſtry render the cultivating our mind, the moderating our paſſions, the enlightening our reaſon, an agreeable occupation; while we are every day ſenſible of our progreſs, and behold our inward features and countenance brightening, inceſſantly with new charms? Begin by curing yourſelf of this lethargic indolence; the taſk is not difficult: You need but taſte the ſweets of honeſt labour. Proceed to learn the juſt value of every purſuit; long ſtudy is not requiſite: Compare, tho' but for once, the mind to the body, virtue to fortune, and glory to pleaſure. You will then perceive the advantages of induſtry: You will then be ſenſible what are the proper objects of your induſtry.

In vain do you ſeek repoſe from beds of roſes: In vain do you hope for enjoyment from the moſt delicious wines and fruits. Your indolence itſelf becomes a fatigue: Your pleaſure itſelf creates diſguſt. The mind, unexerciſed, finds every delight inſipid and loathſome; and ere yet the body, full of noxious humours, feels the torment of its multiplied diſeaſes, your nobler part is ſenſible of the invading poiſon, and ſeeks in vain to relieve its anxiety by new pleaſures, which ſtill augment the fatal malady.

I need not tell you, that by this eager purſuit of pleaſure, you more and more expoſe yourſelf to fortune and accidents, and rivet your affections on external objects, which chance may, in a moment, raviſh from you. I ſhall ſuppoſe, that your indulgent ſtars favour you ſtill with the enjoyment of your riches and poſſeſſions. I prove to you, that even in the midſt of your luxurious pleaſures, you are unhappy; and that, by too much indulgence, you are incapable of enjoying what proſperous fortune ſtill allows you to poſſeſs.

But

But ſurely the inſtability of fortune is a conſideration not to be over-looked or neglected. Happineſs cannot poſſibly exiſt, where there is no ſecurity; and ſecurity can have no place, where fortune has any dominion. Tho' that unſtable deity ſhould not exert her rage againſt you, the dread of it would ſtill torment you; would diſturb your ſlumbers, haunt your dreams, and throw a damp on the jollity of your moſt delicious banquets.

The temple of wiſdom is ſeated on a rock, above the rage of the fighting elements, and inacceſſible to all the malice of man. The rolling thunder breaks below; and thoſe more terrible inſtruments of human fury reach not to ſo ſublime a height. The ſage, while he breathes that ſerene air, looks down with pleaſure, mixed with compaſſion, on the errors of miſtaken mortals, who blindly ſeek for the true path of life, and purſue riches, nobility, honour, or power, for genuine felicity. The greateſt part he beholds diſappointed of their fond wiſhes: Some lament, that having once poſſeſſed the object of their deſires, it is raviſhed from them by envious fortune: And all complain, that even their own vows, tho' granted, cannot give them happineſs, or relieve the anxiety of their diſtracted minds.

But does the ſage preſerve himſelf always in this philoſophic indifference, and reſt contented with lamenting the miſeries of mankind, without ever employing himſelf for their relief? Does he conſtantly indulge this ſevere wiſdom, which, by pretending to elevate him above human accidents, does in reality harden his heart, and render him careleſs of the intereſts of mankind, and of ſociety? No: he knows that in this ſullen *Apathy*, neither true wiſdom nor true happineſs are to be found. He feels too ſtrongly the charm of the ſocial affections ever to counteract ſo ſweet, ſo natural, ſo virtuous a pro-

propenſity. Even when, bathed in tears, he laments the miſeries of human race, of his country, of his friends, and unable to give ſuccour, can only relieve them by compaſſion; he yet rejoices in the generous diſpoſition, and feels a ſatisfaction ſuperior to that of the moſt indulged ſenſe. So engaging are the ſentiments of humanity, that they brighten up the very face of ſorrow, and operate like the ſun, which, ſhining on a duſky cloud or falling rain, paints on them the moſt glorious colours which are to be found in the whole circle of nature.

But 'tis not here alone, that the ſocial virtues diſplay their energy. With whatever ingredient you mix them, they are ſtill predominant. As ſorrow cannot overcome them, ſo neither can ſenſual pleaſure obſcure them. The joys of love, however tumultuous, baniſh not the tender ſentiments of ſympathy and affection. They even derive their chief influence from that generous paſſion; and when preſented alone, afford nothing to the unhappy mind but laſſitude and diſguſt. Behold this ſprightly debauchee, who profeſſes a contempt of all other pleaſures but thoſe of wine and jollity: Separate him from his companions, like a ſpark from a fire, where before it contributed to the general blaze: His alacrity ſuddenly extinguiſhes; and tho' ſurrounded with every other means of delight, he lothes the ſumptuous banquet, and prefers even the moſt abſtracted ſtudy and ſpeculation, as more agreeable and entertaining.

But the ſocial paſſions never afford ſuch tranſporting pleaſures, or make ſo glorious an appearance in the eyes both of GOD and man, as when, ſhaking off every earthly mixture, they aſſociate themſelves with the ſentiments of virtue, and prompt us to laudable and worthy actions. As harmonious colours mutually give and receive a luſtre by their friendly union; ſo do theſe ennobling

nobling ſentiments of the human mind. See the triumph of nature in parental affection! What ſelfiſh paſſion, what ſenſual delight is a match for it! Whether a man exults in the proſperity and virtue of his offſpring, or flies to their ſuccour, thro' the moſt threatning and tremendous dangers?

Proceed ſtill in purifying the generous paſſion, you will ſtill the more admire its ſhining glories. What charms are there in the harmony of minds, and in a friendſhip founded on mutual eſteem and gratitude! What ſatisfaction in relieving the diſtreſſed, in comforting the afflicted, in raiſing the fallen, and in ſtopping the career of cruel fortune, or of more cruel man, in their inſults over the good and virtuous! But what ſupreme joy in the victories over vice as well as miſery, when, by virtuous example or wiſe exhortation, our fellow-creatures are taught to govern their paſſions, reform their vices, and ſubdue their worſt enemies, which inhabit within their own boſoms?

But theſe objects are ſtill too limited for the human mind, which, being of celeſtial origin, ſwells with the divineſt and moſt enlarged affections, and carrying its attention beyond kindred and acquaintance, extends its benevolent wiſhes to the moſt diſtant poſterity. It views liberty and laws as the ſource of human happineſs, and devotes itſelf, with the utmoſt alacrity, to their guardianſhip and protection. Toils, dangers, death itſelf carry their charms, when we brave them for the public good, and ennoble that being, which we generouſly ſacrifice for the intereſts of our country. Happy the man, whom indulgent fortune allows to pay to virtue what he owes to nature, and to make a generous gift of what muſt otherwiſe be raviſhed from him by cruel neceſſity!

In the true ſage and patriot are united whatever can diſtinguiſh human nature, or elevate mortal man to a re-

reſemblance with the divinity. The ſofteſt benevolence, the moſt undaunted reſolution, the tendereſt ſentiments, the moſt ſublime love of virtue, all theſe animate ſucceſſively his tranſported boſom. What ſatisfaction, when he looks within, to find the moſt turbulent paſſions tuned to juſt harmony and concord, and every jarring ſound baniſhed from this enchanting muſic! If the contemplation, even of inanimate beauty, be ſo delightful; if it raviſhes the ſenſes, even when the fair form is foreign to us: What muſt be the effects of moral beauty? And what influence muſt it have, when it embelliſhes our own mind, and is the reſult of our own reflection and induſtry?

But where is the reward of virtue? And what recompence has nature provided for ſuch important ſacrifices, as thoſe of life and fortune, which we muſt often make to it? Oh, ſons of earth! Are you ignorant of the value of this celeſtial miſtreſs? And do you meanly inquire for her portion, when you obſerve her genuine charms? But know, that nature has been indulgent to human weakneſs, and has not left this favourite child naked and unendowed. She has provided virtue of the richeſt dowry; but being careful, leſt the allurements of intereſt ſhould engage ſuch ſuitors, as were inſenſible of the native worth of ſo divine a beauty, ſhe has wiſely provided, that this dowry can have no charms but in the eyes of thoſe who are already tranſported with the love of virtue. GLORY is the portion of virtue, the ſweet reward of honourable toils, the triumphant crown, which covers the thoughtful head of the diſintereſted patriot, or the duſty brow of the victorious warrior. Elevated by ſo ſublime a prize, the man of virtue looks down with contempt on all the allurements of pleaſure, and all the menaces of danger. Death itſelf loſes its terrors, when he conſiders, that its dominion extends only over a part of

of him, and that, in ſpite of death and time, the rage of the elements, and the endleſs viciſſitude of human affairs, he is aſſured of an immortal fame among all the ſons of men.

There ſurely is a being who preſides over the univerſe; and who, with infinite wiſdom and power, has reduced the jarring elements into juſt order and propoſtion. Let ſpeculative reaſoners diſpute, how far this beneficent being extends his care, and whether he prolongs our exiſtence beyond the grave, in order to beſtow on virtue its juſt reward, and render it fully triumphant. The man of morals, without deciding any thing on ſo dubious a ſubject, is ſatisfied with that portion which is marked out to him by the ſupreme diſpoſer of all things. Gratefully he accepts of that farther reward prepared for him; but if diſappointed, he thinks not virtue an empty name; but juſtly eſteeming it its own reward, he gratefully acknowleges the bounty of his creator, who, by calling him forth into exiſtence, has thereby afforded him an opportunity of once acquiring ſo invaluable a poſſeſſion.

ESSAY

ESSAY XVII.

The PLATONIST †.

TO ſome philoſophers it appears matter of ſurprize, that all mankind, poſſeſſing the ſame nature, and being endowed with the ſame faculties, ſhould yet differ ſo widely in their purſuits and inclinations, and that one ſhould utterly condemn what is fondly ſought after by another. To ſome it appears matter of ſtill more ſurprize, that a man ſhould differ ſo widely from himſelf at different times; and, after poſſeſſion, reject with diſdain what, before, was the object of all his vows and wiſhes. To me this feverish uncertainty and irreſolution, in human conduct, ſeems altogether unavoidable; nor can a rational ſoul, made for the contemplation of the Supreme Being, and of his works, ever enjoy tranquillity or ſatisfaction, while detained in the ignoble purſuits of ſenſual pleaſure or popular applauſe. The divinity is a boundleſs ocean of bliſs and glory: Human minds are ſmaller ſtreams, which ariſing at firſt from this ocean, ſeek ſtill, amid all their wanderings, to return to it, and to loſe themſelves in that immenſity of perfection. When checked in this natural courſe, by vice or folly, they become furious and enraged;

† Or, the man of contemplation, and *philoſophical* devotion.

raged; and, ſwelling to a torrent, do then ſpread horror and devaſtation on the neighbouring plains.

In vain, by pompous phraſe and paſſionate expreſſion, each recommends his own purſuit, and invites the credulous hearers to an imitation of his life and manners. The heart belies the countenance, and ſenſibly feels, even amid the higheſt ſucceſs, the unſatisfactory nature of all thoſe pleaſures, which detain it from its true object. I examine the voluptuous man before enjoyment; I meaſure the vehemence of his deſire, and the importance of his object; I find that all his happineſs proceeds only from that hurry of thought which takes him from himſelf, and turns his view from his guilt and miſery. I conſider him a moment after; he has now enjoyed the pleaſure, which he fondly ſought after. The ſenſe of his guilt and miſery returns upon him with double anguiſh: His mind tormented with fear and remorſe; his body depreſſed with diſguſt and ſatiety.

But a more auguſt, at leaſt a more haughty perſonage, preſents himſelf boldly to our cenſure; and aſſuming the title of a philoſopher and man of morals, offers to ſubmit to the moſt rigid examination. He challenges with a viſible, tho' concealed impatience, our approbation and applauſe; and ſeems offended, that we ſhould heſitate a moment before we break out into admiration of his virtue. Seeing this impatience, I heſitate ſtill more: I begin to examine the motives of his ſeeming virtue: But behold! ere I can enter upon this inquiry, he flings himſelf from me; and addreſſing his diſcourſe to that crowd of heedleſs auditors, fondly abuſes them by his magnificent pretenſions.

O philoſopher! thy wiſdom is vain, and thy virtue unprofitable. Thou ſeekeſt the ignorant applauſes of men,

men, not the ſolid reflections of thy own conſcience, or the more ſolid approbation of that being, who, with one regard of his all-ſeeing eye, penetrates the univerſe. Thou ſurely art conſcious of the hollowneſs of thy pretended probity, whilſt calling thyſelf a citizen, a ſon, a friend, thou forgetteſt thy higher ſovereign, thy true father, thy greateſt benefactor. Where is the adoration due to ſuch infinite perfection, whence every thing good and valuable is derived? Where is the gratitude, owing to thy creator, who called thee forth from nothing, who placed thee in all theſe relations to thy fellow-creatures, and requiring thee to fulfil the duty of each relation, forbids thee to neglect what thou oweſt to himſelf, the moſt perfect being, to whom thou art connected by the cloſeſt tye?

But thou art thyſelf thy own idol: Thou worſhippeſt thy *imaginary* perfections: Or rather, ſenſible of thy *real* imperfections, thou ſeekeſt only to deceive the world, and to pleaſe thy fancy, by multiplying thy ignorant admirers. Thus, not contented with neglecting what is moſt excellent in the univerſe, thou deſireſt to ſubſtitute in his place what is moſt vile and contemptible.

Conſider all the works of mens hands; all the inventions of human wit, in which thou affecteſt ſo nice a diſcernment: Thou wilt find, that the moſt perfect production ſtill proceeds from the moſt perfect thought, and that 'tis MIND alone, which we admire, while we beſtow our applauſe on the graces of a well proportioned ſtatue, or the ſymmetry of a noble pile. The ſtatuary, the architect comes ſtill in view, and makes us reflect on the beauty of his art and contrivance, which, from a heap of unformed matter, could extract ſuch expreſſions and proportions. This ſuperior beauty of thought

and intelligence thou thyſelf acknowlegeſt, while thou inviteſt us to contemplate, in thy conduct, the harmony of affections, the dignity of ſentiments, and all thoſe graces of a mind, which chiefly merit our attention. But why ſtoppeſt thou ſhort? Seeſt thou nothing farther that is valuable? Amid thy rapturous applauſes of beauty and order, art thou ſtill ignorant where is to be found the moſt conſummate beauty? the moſt perfect order? Compare the works of art with thoſe of nature. The one are but imitations of the other. The nearer art approaches to nature, the more perfect is it eſteemed. But ſtill, how wide are its neareſt approaches, and what an immenſe interval may be obſerved between them? Art copies only the outſide of nature, leaving the inward and more admirable ſprings and principles; as exceeding her imitation; as beyond her comprehenſion. Art copies only the minute productions of nature, deſpairing to reach that grandeur and magnificence, which are ſo aſtoniſhing in the maſterly works of her original. Can we then be ſo blind, as not to diſcover an intelligence and a deſign in the exquiſite and moſt ſtupendous contrivance of the univerſe? Can we be ſo ſtupid, as not to feel the warmeſt raptures of worſhip and adoration, upon the contemplation of that intelligent being, ſo infinitely good and wiſe?

The moſt perfect happineſs, ſurely, muſt ariſe from the contemplation of the moſt perfect object. But what more perfect than beauty and virtue? And where is beauty to be found equal to that of the univerſe? Or virtue, which can be compared to the benevolence and juſtice of the Deity? If aught can diminiſh the pleaſure of this contemplation, it muſt be either the narrowneſs of our faculties, which conceals from us the greateſt part of theſe beauties and perfections; or the ſhort-

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neſs of our lives, which allows not time ſufficient to inſtruct us in them. But 'tis our comfort, that if we employ worthily the faculties here aſſigned us, they will be enlarged in another ſtate of exiſtence, ſo as to render us more ſuitable worſhippers of our maker: And that the taſk, which can never be finiſhed in time, will be the buſineſs of an eternity.

ESSAY XVIII.

The SCEPTIC.

I HAVE long entertained a great ſuſpicion, with regard to the deciſions of philoſophers upon all ſubjects, and found in myſelf a greater inclination to diſpute, than aſſent to their concluſions. There is one miſtake, to which they ſeem liable, almoſt without exception; they confine too much their principles, and make no account of that vaſt variety, which nature has ſo much affected in all her operations. When a philoſopher has once laid hold of a favourite principle, which perhaps accounts for many natural effects, he will extend the ſame principle over the whole creation, and reduce to it every phænomenon, tho' by the moſt violent and abſurd reaſoning. Our own mind being narrow and contracted, we cannot extend our conception to the variety and extent of nature; but imagine, that ſhe is as much bounded in her operations, as we are in our ſpeculations.

But if ever this infirmity of philoſophers is to be ſuſpected on any occaſion, 'tis in their reaſonings concerning human life, and the methods of attaining happineſs. In that caſe, they are led aſtray, not only by the narrowneſs of their underſtandings, but alſo by that of their paſſions. Almoſt every one has a predominant inclination, to which all his other deſires and affections ſub-

mit, and which governs him, tho', perhaps, with some intervals, thro' the whole course of his life. 'Tis difficult for him to apprehend, that any thing, which appears totally indifferent to him, can ever give enjoyment to any person, or can possess charms, which altogether escape his observation. His own pursuits are always, in his account, the most engaging: The objects of his passion, the most valuable: And the road which he pursues, the only one that leads to happiness.

But would these prejudiced reasoners reflect a moment, there are many obvious instances and arguments, sufficient to undeceive them, and make them enlarge their maxims and principles. Do they not see the vast variety of inclinations and pursuits among our species, where each man seems fully satisfied with his own course of life, and would esteem it the greatest unhappiness to be confined to that of his neighbour? Do they not feel in themselves, that what pleases at one time, displeases at another, by the change of inclination; and that it is not in their power, by their utmost efforts, to recall that taste or appetite, which formerly bestowed charms on what now appears indifferent or disagreeable? What is the meaning therefore of those general preferences of the town or country life, of a life of action or one of pleasure, of retirement or society; when, besides the different inclinations of different men, every one's experience may convince him, that each of these kinds of life is agreeable in its turn, and that their variety or their judicious mixture chiefly contributes to the rendering all of them agreeable.

But shall this business be allowed to go altogether at adventures? And must a man consult only his humour and inclination, in order to determine his course of life, without ever employing his reason to inform him what road is preferable, and leads most surely to happiness? Is

Is there no difference then between one man's conduct and another?

I answer, There is a great difference. One man, following his inclinations, in chusing his course of life, may employ much surer means for succeeding than another, who is led by his inclination into the same course of life, and pursues the same object. *Are riches the chief object of your desires?* Acquire skill in your profession; be diligent in the exercise of it; enlarge the circle of your friends and acquaintance; avoid pleasure and expence; and never be generous, but with a view of gaining more than you could save by frugality. *Would you acquire the public esteem?* Guard equally against the extremes of arrogance and fawning. Let it appear that you set a value upon yourself, but without despising others. If you fall into either of the extremes, you either provoke man's pride by your insolence, or teach them to despise you by your timorous submission, and by the mean opinion which you seem to entertain of yourself.

These, you say, are the maxims of common prudence, and discretion; what every parent inculcates on his child, and what every man of sense pursues in the course of life, which he has chosen.—What is it then you desire more? Do you come to a philosopher, as to a *cunning man*, to learn something by magic or witchcraft, beyond what can be known by common prudence and discretion?—— Yes; we come to a philosopher to be instructed, How we shall chuse our ends, more than the means for attaining these ends: We want to know what desires we shall gratify, what passions we shall comply with, what appetites we shall indulge. As to the rest, we trust to common sense, and the general maxims of the world, for our instruction.

I am sorry, then, I have pretended to be a philosopher: For I find your questions very perplexing; and

am in danger, if my anſwer be too rigid and ſevere, of paſſing for a pedant and ſcholaſtic; if it be too eaſy and free, of being taken for a preacher of vice and immorality. However, to ſatisfy you, I ſhall deliver my opinion upon the matter, and only deſire you to eſteem it of as little conſequence as I do myſelf. By that means you will neither think it worthy of your ridicule nor your anger.

If we can depend upon any principle, which we learn from philoſophy, this, I think, may be conſidered as certain and undoubted, That there is nothing in itſelf, valuable or deſpicable, deſireable or hateful, beautiful or deformed; but that theſe attributes ariſe from the particular conſtitution and frabric of human ſentiments and affections. What ſeems the moſt delicious food to one animal, appears loathſome to another: What affects the feeling of one with delight, produces uneaſineſs to another. This is confeſſedly the caſe with regard to all the bodily ſenſes: But if we examine the matter more accurately, we ſhall find that the ſame obſervation holds even where the mind concurs with the body, and mingles its ſentiments with the exterior appetites.

Deſire this paſſionate lover to give you a character of his miſtreſs: He will tell you that he is at a loſs for words to deſcribe her charms, and will aſk you very ſeriouſly if ever you was acquainted with a goddeſs or an angel? If you anſwer that you never was: He will then ſay, That 'tis impoſſible for you to form a conception of ſuch divine beauties as thoſe which his charmer poſſeſſes; ſo complete a ſhape; ſuch proportioned features; ſo engaging an air; ſuch ſweetneſs of diſpoſition; ſuch gaiety of humour. You can infer nothing, however, from all this diſcourſe, but that the poor man is in love; and that the general appetite between the ſexes, which nature has infuſed into all animals, is in him determined

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to a particular object by ſome qualities, which give him pleaſure. The ſame divine creature, not only to a different animal, but alſo to a different man, appears a mere mortal being, and is beheld with the utmoſt indifference.

Nature has given all animals a like prejudice in favour of their offspring. As ſoon as the helpleſs infant ſees the light, tho' in every other eye it appears a deſpicable and a miſerable creature, it is regarded by its fond parent with the utmoſt affection, and is preferred to every other object, however perfect and accompliſhed. The paſſion alone, ariſing from the original ſtructure and formation of human nature, beſtows a value on the moſt inſignificant object.

We may puſh the ſame obſervation further, and may conclude, that even when the mind operates alone, and feeling the ſentiments of blame or approbation, pronounces one object deformed and odious, another beautiful and amiable; I ſay, that even in this caſe, thoſe qualities are not really in the objects, but belong entirely to the ſentiments of that mind which blames or praiſes. I grant, that it will be more difficult to make this propoſition evident, and as it were, palpable, to negligent thinkers, becauſe nature is more uniform in the ſentiments of the mind than in moſt feelings of the body, and produces a nearer reſemblance in the inward than in the outward part of human kind. There is ſomething approaching to principles in mental taſte; and critics can reaſon and diſpute much more plauſibly than cooks or perfumers. We may obſerve, however, That this uniformity among human kind, hinders not, but that there is a conſiderable diverſity in the ſentiments of beauty and worth, and that education, cuſtom, prejudice, caprice, and humour frequently vary our taſte of this kind. You will never convince a man, who is not accuſtomed to ITALIAN muſic, and has not an ear to follow its intricacies,

cacies, that a SCOTS tune is not preferable. You have not even any ſingle argument, beyond your own taſte, which you can employ in your behalf: And to your antagoniſt, his particular taſte will always appear a much more convincing argument to the contrary. If you be wiſe, each of you will allow, that the other may be in the right; and having many other inſtances of this diverſity of taſte, you will both confeſs, that beauty and worth are merely of a relative nature, and conſiſt in an agreeable ſentiment, produced by an object on a particular mind, according to the peculiar ſtructure and conſtitution of that mind.

By this diverſity of ſentiment, obſervable in human kind, nature has, perhaps, intended to make us ſenſible of her authority, and let us ſee what ſurprizing changes ſhe could produce on the paſſions and deſires of mankind, merely by the change of their inward fabric, without any alteration on the objects. The vulgar may even be convinced by this argument: But men accuſtomed to thinking may draw a more convincing, at leaſt a more general argument, from the very nature of the ſubject.

In the operation of reaſoning, the mind does nothing but run over its objects, as they are ſuppoſed to ſtand in reality, without adding any thing to them, or diminiſhing any thing from them. If I examine the PTOLOMAIC and COPERNICAN ſyſtems, I endeavour only, by my enquiries, to know the real ſituation of the planets; that is, in other words, I endeavour to give them, in my mind or conception, the ſame relations which they bear towards each other in the heavens. To this operation of the mind, therefore, there ſeems to be always a real, tho' often an unknown ſtandard, in the nature of things; nor is truth or falſhood variable by the various apprehenſions of mankind. Tho' all human race ſhould for ever conclude, that the ſun moves, and the earth remains at

reſt,

reſt, the ſun ſtirs not an inch from his place for all theſe reaſonings; and ſuch concluſions are eternally falſe and erroneous.

But the caſe is not the ſame with the qualities of *beautiful and deformed, deſirable and odious*, as with truth and falſhood. In the former caſe, the mind is not contented with merely ſurveying its objects, as they ſtand in themſelves: It alſo feels a ſentiment of delight or uneaſineſs, approbation or blame, conſequent to that ſurvey; and this ſentiment determines it to pronounce the object *beautiful or deformed, deſirable or odious*. Now, 'tis evident, that this ſentiment muſt depend upon the particular fabric or ſtructure of the mind, which enables ſuch particular objects to operate in ſuch a particular manner, and produces a ſympathy or conformity between the mind and the objects. Vary the ſtructure of the mind or inward organs, the ſentiment no longer follows, tho' the objects remain the ſame. The ſentiment being different from the object, and ariſing from its operation upon the organs of the mind, an alteration upon the latter muſt vary the effect, nor can the ſame object, preſented to a mind totally different, produce the ſame ſentiment.

This concluſion every one is apt to form of himſelf, without much philoſophy, where the ſentiment is evidently diſtinguiſhable from the object. Who is not ſenſible, that power, and glory, and vengeance, are not deſirable of themſelves, but derive all their value from the ſtructure of human paſſions, which begets a deſire towards ſuch particular objects? But with regard to beauty, either natural or moral, the caſe is commonly ſuppoſed to be different. The agreeable quality is thought to lie in the object, not in the ſentiment; and that merely becauſe the ſentiment is not ſo turbulent and violent as

to

to diſtinguiſh itſelf, in an evident manner, from the perception of the object.

But a very little reflection ſuffices to diſtinguiſh them. A man may know exactly all the circles and ellipſes of the COPERNICAN ſyſtem, and all the irregular ſpirals of the PTOLOMAIC, without perceiving that the former is more beautiful than the latter. EUCLID has very fully explained every quality of the circle, but has not, in any propoſition, ſaid a word of its beauty. The reaſon is evident. Beauty is not a quality of the circle. It lies not in any part of the line *whoſe* parts are all equally diſtant from a common centre. It is only the effect, which that figure operates upon the mind, whoſe particular fabric or ſtructure renders it ſuſceptible of ſuch ſentiments. In vain would you look for it in the circle, or ſeek it, either by your ſenſes, or by mathematical reaſonings, in all the properties of that figure.

The mathematician, who took no other pleaſure in reading VIRGIL, but that of examining ENEAS's voyage by the map, might underſtand perfectly the meaning of every Latin word, imployed by that divine author; and conſequently, might have a diſtinct idea of the whole narration. He would even have a more diſtinct idea of it, than they could have who had not ſtudied ſo exactly the geography of the poem. He knew, therefore, every thing in the poem: But he was ignorant of its beauty; becauſe the beauty, properly ſpeaking, lies not in the poem, but in the ſentiment or taſte of the reader. And where a man has no ſuch delicacy of temper, as to make him feel this ſentiment, he muſt be ignorant of the beauty tho' poſſeſſed of the ſcience and underſtanding of an angel *. The

* Were I not afraid of appearing too philoſophical, I ſhould remind my reader of that famous doctrine, ſuppoſed to be fully proved in modern times, "That taſtes and colours, and all other ſenſible qualities, lie not "in

The inference upon the whole is, that it is not from the value or worth of the object, which any perſon purſues, that we can determine his enjoyment, but merely from the paſſion with which he purſues it, and the ſucceſs which he meets with in his purſuit. Objects have abſolutely no worth or value in themſelves. They derive their worth merely from the paſſion. If that be ſtrong, and ſteady, and ſucceſsful, the perſon is happy. It cannot reaſonably be doubted, but a little miſs, dreſt in a new gown for a dancing-ſchool ball, receives as compleat enjoyment as the greateſt orator, who triumphs in the ſplendor of his eloquence, while he governs the paſſions and reſolutions of a numerous aſſembly.

All the difference, therefore, between one man and another, with regard to life, conſiſts either in the *paſſion*, or in the *enjoyment*: And theſe differences are ſufficient to produce the wide extremes of happineſs and miſery.

To be happy, the *paſſion* muſt neither be too violent nor too remiſs. In the firſt caſe, the mind is in a perpetual hurry and tumult; in the ſecond, it ſinks into a diſagreeable indolence and lethargy.

To be happy, the paſſion muſt be benign and ſocial; not rough or fierce. The affections of the latter kind are not near ſo agreeable to the feeling, as thoſe of the former. Who will compare rancour and animoſity, envy

" in the bodies, but merely in the ſenſes." The caſe is the ſame with beauty and deformity, virtue and vice. This doctrine, however, takes off no more from the reality of the latter qualities, than from that of the former; nor need it give any umbrage either to critics or moraliſts. Tho' colours were allowed to lie only in the eye, would dyers or painters ever be leſs regarded or eſteemed? There is a ſufficient uniformity in the ſenſes and feelings of mankind, to make all theſe qualities the objects of art and reaſoning, and to have the greateſt influence on life and manners. And as 'tis certain, that the diſcovery above-mentioned in natural philoſophy, makes no alteration on action and conduct; why ſhould a like diſcovery in moral philoſophy make any alteration?

and

and revenge, to friendſhip, benignity, clemency and gratitude?

To be happy, the paſſion muſt be chearful and gay, not gloomy and melancholy. A propenſity to hope and joy is real riches: One to fear and ſorrow, real poverty.

Some paſſions or inclinations, in the *enjoyment* of their object, are not ſo ſteady or conſtant as others, nor convey ſuch durable pleaſure and ſatisfaction. *Philoſophical devotion*, for inſtance, like the enthuſiaſm of a poet, is the tranſitory effect of high ſpirits, great leiſure, a fine genius, and a habit of ſtudy and contemplation: But notwithſtanding all theſe circumſtances, an abſtracted, inviſible object, like that which *natural* religion alone preſents to us, cannot long actuate the mind, or be of any moment in life. To render the paſſion of continuance, we muſt find ſome method of affecting the ſenſes and imagination, and muſt embrace ſome *hiſtorical* as well as *philoſophical* accounts of the divinity. Popular ſuperſtitions and obſervances are even found to be of uſe in this particular.

Tho' the tempers of men be very different, yet we may ſafely pronounce in general, that a life of pleaſure cannot ſupport itſelf ſo long as one of buſineſs, but is much more ſubject to ſatiety and diſguſt. The amuſements, which are the moſt durable, have all a mixture of application and attention in them; ſuch as gaming and hunting. And in general, buſineſs and action fill up all the great vacancies of human life.

But where the temper is the beſt diſpoſed for any *enjoyment*, the object is often wanting: And in this reſpect, the paſſions, which purſue *external* objects, contribute not ſo much to happineſs, as thoſe which reſt in ourſelves; ſince we are neither ſo certain of attaining ſuch ob-

objects, nor ſo ſecure of poſſeſſing them. A paſſion for learning is preferable, with regard to happineſs, to one for riches.

Some men are poſſeſſed of great ſtrength of mind; and even when they purſue *external* objects, are not much affected by a diſappointment, but renew their application and induſtry with the greateſt chearfulneſs. Nothing contributes more to happineſs than this turn of mind.

According to this ſhort and imperfect ſketch of human life, the happieſt diſpoſition of mind is the *virtuous*; or, in other words, that which leads to action and employment, renders us ſenſible to the ſocial paſſions, ſteels the heart againſt the aſſaults of fortune, reduces the affections to a juſt moderation, makes our own thoughts an entertainment to us, and inclines us rather to the pleaſures of ſociety and converſation, than to thoſe of the ſenſes. This, in the mean time, muſt be obvious to the moſt careleſs reaſoner, that all diſpoſitions of mind are not alike favourable to happineſs, and that one paſſion or humour may be extremely deſirable, while another is equally diſagreeable. And indeed, all the difference between the conditions of life depends upon the mind; nor is there any one ſituation of affairs, in itſelf, preferable to another. Good and ill, both natural and moral, are entirely relative to human ſentiment and affection. No man would ever be unhappy, could he alter his feelings. PROTEUS-like, he would elude all attacks, by the continual alterations of his ſhape and form.

But of this reſource nature has, in a great meaſure, deprived us. The fabric and conſtitution of our mind no more depends on our choice, than that of our body. The generality of men have not even the ſmalleſt notion, that any alteration in this reſpect can ever be deſirable. As a ſtream neceſſarily follows the ſeveral inclinations of the ground, on which it runs; ſo are the ignorant and thought-

thoughtleſs part of mankind actuated by their natural propenſities. Such are effectually excluded from all pretenſions to philoſophy, and the *medicine of the mind*, ſo much boaſted. But even upon the wiſe and thoughtful, nature has a prodigious influence; nor is it always in a man's power, by the utmoſt art and induſtry, to correct his temper, and attain that virtuous character, to which he aſpires. The empire of philoſophy extends over a few; and with regard to theſe too, her authority is very weak and limited. Men may well be ſenſible of the value of virtue, and may deſire to attain it; but 'tis not always certain, that they will be ſucceſsful in their wiſhes.

Whoever conſiders, without prejudice, the courſe of human actions, will find, that mankind are almoſt entirely guided by conſtitution and temper, and that general maxims have little influence, but ſo far as they affect our taſte or ſentiment. If a man have a lively ſenſe of honour and virtue, with moderate paſſions, his conduct will always be conformable to the rules of morality; or if he depart from them, his return will be eaſy and expeditious. But, on the other hand, where one is born of ſo perverſe a frame of mind, of ſo callous and inſenſible a diſpoſition, as to have no reliſh for virtue and humanity, no ſympathy with his fellow creatures, no deſire of eſteem and applauſe; ſuch a one muſt be allowed entirely incurable, nor is there any remedy in philoſophy. He reaps no ſatisfaction but from low and ſenſual objects, or from the indulgence of malignant paſſions: He feels no remorſe to controul his vicious inclinations: He has not even that ſenſe or taſte, which is requiſite to make him deſire a better character: For my part, I know not how I ſhould addreſs myſelf to ſuch a one, or by what arguments I ſhould endeavour to reform him. Should I tell him of the inward ſatisfaction

tion which reſults from laudable and humane actions, the delicate pleaſures of diſintereſted love and friendſhip, the laſting enjoyments of a good name and an eſtabliſhed character, he might ſtill reply, that theſe were, perhaps, pleaſures to ſuch as were ſuſceptible to them; but that, for his part, he finds himſelf of a quite different turn and diſpoſition. I muſt repeat it; my philoſophy affords no remedy in ſuch a caſe, nor could I do any thing but lament this perſon's unhappy condition. But then I aſk, If any other philoſophy can afford a remedy; or if it be poſſible, by any ſyſtem, to render all mankind virtuous, however perverſe may be their natural frame of mind? Experience will ſoon convince us of the contrary; and I will venture to affirm, that perhaps, the chief benefit, which reſults from philoſophy, ariſes in an indirect manner, and proceeds more from its ſecret, inſenſible influence, than from its immediate application.

'Tis certain, that a ſerious attention to the ſciences and liberal arts, ſoftens and humanizes the temper, and cheriſhes thoſe fine emotions, in which true virtue and honour conſiſts. It rarely, very rarely happens, that a man of taſte and learning is not, at leaſt, an honeſt man, whatever frailties may attend him. The bent of his mind to ſpeculative ſtudies muſt mortify in him the paſſions of intereſt and ambition, and muſt, at the ſame time, give him a greater ſenſibility of all the decencies and duties of life. He feels more fully a moral diſtinction in characters and manners, nor is his ſenſe of this kind diminiſhed, but, on the contrary, it is much encreaſed, by his ſpeculations.

Beſides ſuch inſenſible changes upon the temper and diſpoſition, 'tis highly probable, that others may be produced by ſtudy and application. The prodigious effects of education may convince us, that the mind is not altogether ſtubborn and inflexible, but will admit of many

alterations from its original make and ſtructure. Let a man propoſe to himſelf the model of a character, which he approves of: Let him be well acquainted with thoſe particulars, in which his own character deviates from this model: Let him keep a conſtant watch over himſelf, and bend his mind, by a continual effort, from the vices, towards the virtues; and I doubt not but, in time, he will find, in his temper, an alteration to the better.

Habit is another powerful means of reforming the mind, and implanting in it good diſpoſitions and inclinations. A man who continues in a courſe of ſobriety and temperance, will hate riot and diſorder: If he engage in buſineſs or ſtudy, indolence will ſeem a puniſhment to him: If he conſtrain himſelf to practiſe beneficence and affability, he will ſoon abhor all inſtances of pride and violence. Where one is thorowly convinced that the virtuous courſe of life is preferable; if he has but reſolution enough, for ſome time, to impoſe a violence on himſelf; his reformation need not be deſpaired of. The misfortune is, that this conviction and this reſolution never can have place, unleſs a man be, beforehand, tolerably virtuous.

Here then is the chief triumph of art and philoſophy: It inſenſibly refines the temper, and it points out to us thoſe diſpoſitions which we ſhould endeavour to attain, by a conſtant *bent* of mind, and by repeated *habit*. Beyond this I cannot acknowlege it to have great influence; and I muſt entertain doubts concerning all thoſe exhortations and conſolations, which are in ſuch vogue among all ſpeculative reaſoners.

We have already obſerved, that no objects are, of themſelves, deſirable or odious, valuable or deſpicable; but that objects acquire theſe qualities from the particu-

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lar character and conſtitution of the mind, which ſurveys them. To diminiſh therefore, or augment any perſon's value for an object, to excite or moderate his paſſions, there are no direct arguments or reaſons, which can be employed with any force or influence. The catching flies, like DOMITIAN, if it give more pleaſure, is preferable to the hunting wild beaſts, like WILLIAM RUFUS, or conquering kingdoms, like ALEXANDER.

But tho' the value of every object can be determined only by the ſentiments or paſſions of every individual, we may obſerve, that the paſſions, in pronouncing their verdict, conſider not the object ſimply, as it is in itſelf, but ſurvey it with all the circumſtances, which attend it. A man tranſported with joy, on account of his poſſeſſing a diamond, confines not his view to the gliſtering ſtone before him: He alſo conſiders its rarity, and from thence chiefly ariſes his pleaſure and exultation. Here therefore a philoſopher may ſtep in, and ſuggeſt particular views and conſiderations, and circumſtances, which otherwiſe would have eſcaped us; and, by that means, he may either moderate or excite any particular paſſion.

It may ſeem unreaſonable abſolutely to deny the authority of philoſophy in this reſpect: But it muſt be confeſſed, that there lies this ſtrong preſumption againſt it, that if theſe views be natural and obvious, they would have occurred of themſelves, without the aſſiſtance of philoſophy; if they be not natural, they never can have any influence on the affections. *Theſe* are of a very delicate nature, and cannot be forced or conſtrained by the utmoſt art or induſtry. A conſideration, which we ſeek for on purpoſe, which we enter into with difficulty, which we retain with care and attention, can never produce thoſe genuine and durable movements of paſſion, which are the reſult of nature, and the conſtitution of the mind. A man may as well pretend to cure

himſelf of love, by viewing his miſtreſs thro' the *artificial* medium of a microſcope, or proſpect, and beholding there the coarſeneſs of her ſkin, and monſtrous diſproportion of her features, as hope to excite or moderate any paſſion by the *artificial* arguments of a SENECA or an EPICTETUS. The remembrance of the natural aſpect and ſituation of the objects will, in both caſes, ſtill recur upon him. The reflections of philoſophy are too ſubtile and diſtant to take place in common life, or eradicate any affection. The air is too fine to breathe in where it is above the winds and clouds of the atmoſphere.

Another defect of thoſe refined reflections, which philoſophy preſents to us, is, that commonly they cannot diminiſh or extinguiſh our vicious paſſions, without diminiſhing or extinguiſhing ſuch as are virtuous, and rendering the mind totally indifferent and unactive. They are for the moſt part, general, and are applicable to all our affections. In vain do we hope to direct their influence only to one ſide. If by inceſſant ſtudy and meditation we have rendered them very intimate and preſent to us, they will operate throughout, and ſpread an univerſal inſenſibility over the mind. When we deſtroy the nerves, we extinguiſh the ſenſe of pleaſure, together with that of pain.

It will be eaſy, by one glance of the eye, to find one or other of theſe defects in moſt of thoſe philoſophical reflections, ſo much celebrated both in ancient and modern times. *Let not the injuries or violence of men*, ſay the philoſophers †, *ever diſcompoſe you by anger or hatred. Would you be angry at the ape for its malice, or the tyger for its ferocity?* This reflection leads us into a bad opinion of human nature, and muſt extinguiſh the ſocial affections. It tends alſo to remove all remorſe for a man's own

† PLUT. *de ira cohibenda.*

crimes,

crimes, when he conſiders, that vice is as natural to mankind, as the particular inſtincts to brute creatures.

All ills ariſe from the order of the univerſe, which is abſolutely perfect. Would you wiſh to diſturb ſo divine an order for the ſake of your own particular intereſt? What if the ills I ſuffer ariſe from malice or oppreſſion? *But the vices and imperfections of men are alſo comprehended in the order of the univerſe.*

If plagues and earthquakes break not heav'n's deſign,
Why then a BORGIA *or a* CATILINE?

Let this be allowed; and my own vices will alſo be a part of the ſame order.

To one who ſaid, that none was happy, who was not above opinion, a SPARTAN replied, *then none are happy but knaves and robbers* †.

Man is born to be miſerable; and is he ſurprized at any particular misfortune? And can he give way to ſorrow and lamentation upon account of any diſaſter? Yes: He very reaſonably laments, that he ſhould be born to be miſerable. Your conſolation preſents a hundred ills for one, that you pretend to eaſe him of.

You ſhould always have before your eyes death, diſeaſe, poverty, blindneſs, exile, calumny, and infamy, as ills which are incident to human nature. When any one of theſe ills falls to your lot, you will bear it the better that you have laid your account with it. I anſwer, If we confine ourſelves to a general and diſtant reflection on the ills of human life, *that* can have no effect to prepare us for them. If by cloſe and intenſe meditation we render them preſent and intimate to us, *that* is the true ſecret to poiſon all our pleaſures, and render us perpetually miſerable.

† PLUT. *Lacon. Apothbeg.*

Your ſorrow is fruitleſs, and will not change the courſe of deſtiny. Very true: And for that very reaſon I am ſorry.

Cicero's conſolation for deafneſs is ſomewhat curious. *How many languages are there*, ſays he, *which you do not underſtand? The* PUNIC, SPANISH, GALLIC, ÆGYPTIAN, *&c. With regard to all theſe, you are as if you were deaf, and yet you are indifferent about the matter. Is it then ſo great a misfortune to be deaf to one language more* †?

I like better the repartee of ANTIPATER the CYRENIAC, when ſome women were condoling with him for his blindneſs? *What!* ſays he, *Do you think there are no pleaſures in the dark?*

Nothing can be more deſtructive, ſays FONTENELLE, *to ambition, and the paſſion for conqueſt, than the true ſyſtem of aſtronomy. What a poor thing is even the whole globe in compariſon of the infinite extent of nature?* This conſideration is evidently too diſtant ever to have any effect. And if it had any, would it not deſtroy patriotiſm as well as ambition? The ſame gallante author adds with ſome reaſon, that the bright eyes of the ladies are the only objects, which loſe nothing of their luſtre or value from the moſt extenſive views of aſtronomy and philoſophy, but ſtand proof againſt every ſyſtem. Would philoſophers adviſe us to limit our affection to them?

Exile, ſays PLUTARCH to a friend in baniſhment, *is no evil: Mathematicians tell us, that the whole earth is but as a point, compared to the heavens. To change one's country, then, is little more than to remove from one ſtreet to another. Man is not a plant, rooted to a certain ſpot of earth: All ſoils and all climates are alike ſuited to him* ‡. Theſe topics are admirable, could they fall only into the

† Tusc. Queſt. Lib. V.
‡ *De exilio.*

hands

hands of baniſhed perſons. But what if they come alſo to the knowledge of thoſe employed in public affairs, and deſtroy all their attachment to their native country? Or will they operate like the quack's medicine, which is equally good for a diabetes and a dropſy?

'Tis certain, were a ſuperior being thruſt into a human body, that the whole of life would to him appear ſo mean, contemptible and puerile, that he never could be induced to take part in any thing, and would ſcarcely give attention to what paſſes around him. To engage him to ſuch a condeſcenſion as to play even the part of a PHILIP with zeal and alacrity, would be much more difficult than to conſtrain the ſame PHILIP, after having been a king and a conqueror during fifty years, to mend old ſhoes with proper care and attention; the occupation which LUCIAN aſſigns him in the infernal regions. Now all the ſame topics of diſdain towards human affairs, which could operate on this ſuppoſed being, occur alſo to a philoſopher; but being, in ſome meaſure, diſproportioned to human capacity, and not being fortified by the experience of any thing better, they make not a full impreſſion on him. He ſees, but he feels not ſufficiently their truth; and is always a ſublime philoſopher, when he needs not; that is, as long as nothing diſturbs him, or rouzes his affections. While others play, he wonders at their keenneſs and ardour; but he no ſooner puts in his own ſtake, than he is commonly tranſported with the ſame paſſions, which he had ſo much condemned while he remained a ſimple ſpectator.

There are chiefly two conſiderations to be met with in books of philoſophy, from which any important effect is to be expected, and that becauſe theſe conſiderations are drawn from common life, and occur upon the moſt ſuperficial view of human affairs. When we reflect on the ſhortneſs and uncertainty of life, how deſpicable

ſeem all our purſuits of happineſs? And even, if we would extend our concern beyond our own life, how frivolous appear our moſt enlarged and moſt generous projects; when we conſider the inceſſant changes and revolutions of human affairs, by which laws and learning, books and governments are hurried away by time, as by a rapid ſtream, and are loſt in the immenſe ocean of matter? Such a reflection certainly tends to mortify all our paſſions: But does it not thereby counterwork the artifice of nature, who has happily deceived us into an opinion, that human life is of ſome importance? And may not ſuch a reflection be employed with ſucceſs by voluptuous reaſoners, in order to lead us from the paths of action and virtue, into the flowery fields of indolence and pleaſure?

We are informed by THUCYDIDES, that, during the famous plague of ATHENS, when death ſeemed preſent to every one, a diſſolute mirth and gaiety prevailed among the people, who exhorted one another to make the moſt of life as long as it endured. The ſame obſervation is made by BOCCACE with regard to the plague of FLORENCE. A like principle make ſoldiers, during war, to be more addicted to riot and expence, than any other race of men. Preſent pleaſure is always of importance; and whatever diminiſhes the importance of all other objects muſt beſtow on it an additional influence and value.

The *ſecond* philoſophical conſideration, which may often have an influence on the affections, is derived from a compariſon of our own condition with the condition of others. This compariſon we are continually making, even in common life; but the misfortune is, that we are apt rather to compare our ſituation with that of our ſuperiors, than with that of our inferiors. A philoſopher corrects this natural infirmity, by turning his view to the other ſide, in order to render himſelf eaſy in the ſituation

ſituation in which fortune has placed him. There are few people, who are not ſuſceptible of ſome conſolation from this reflection, tho' to a very good natured man, the view of human miſeries ſhould rather produce ſorrow than comfort, and add to his lamentations for his own misfortunes a deep compaſſion for thoſe of others. Such is the imperfection, even of the beſt of theſe philoſophical topics of conſolation †.

I ſhall

* The Sceptic, perhaps, carries the matter too far, when he limits all philoſophical topics and reflections to theſe two. There ſeem to be others, whoſe truth is undeniable, and whoſe natural tendency is to tranquillize and ſoften all the paſſions. Philoſophy greedily ſeizes theſe, ſtudies them, weighs them, commits them to the memory, and familiarizes them to the mind: and their influence on tempers, which are thoughtful, gentle, and moderate, may be conſiderable. But what is their influence, you will ſay, if the temper be antecedently diſpoſed after the ſame manner to which they pretend to form it? They may, at leaſt, fortify that temper, and furniſh it with views, by which it may entertain and nouriſh itſelf. Here are a few examples of ſuch philoſophical reflections.

1. Is it not certain, that every condition has concealed ills? Then why envy any body?

2. Every one has known ills; and there is a compenſation throughout. Why not be contented with the preſent?

3. Cuſtom deadens the ſenſe both of the good and the ill, and levels every thing.

4. Health and humour all. The reſt of little conſequence, except theſe be affected.

5. How many other goods have I? Then why be vexed for one ill?

6. How many are happy in the condition of which I complain? How many envy me?

7. Every good muſt be paid for: Fortune by labour, favour by flattery. Would I keep the price, yet have the commodity?

8. Expect not too great happineſs in life. Human nature admits it not.

9. Propoſe not a happineſs too complicated. But does that depend on me? Yes: The firſt choice does. Life is like a game: One may chooſe the game: And paſſion, by degrees, ſeizes the proper object.

10. Anticipate by your hopes and fancy future conſolation, which time infallibly brings to every affliction.

11.

I shall conclude this subject with observing, That tho' virtue be undoubtedly the best choice, when it is attainable; yet such is the disorder and confusion of human affairs, that no perfect œconomy or regular distribution of happiness and misery is ever, in this life, to be expected. Not only the goods of fortune, and the endowments of the body (both which are of great importance) not only these advantages, I say, are unequally divided between the virtuous and vicious, but even the mind itself partakes, in some degree, of this disorder, and the most worthy character, by the very œconomy of the passions, enjoys not always the highest felicity.

'Tis observable, that tho' every bodily disease or pain proceeds from some disorder in the parts, yet the pain is

11. I desire to be rich. Why? That I may possess many fine objects; houses, gardens, equipage, &c. How many fine objects does nature offer to every one without expence? If enjoyed, sufficient. If not: See the effect of custom or of temper, which would soon take off the relish of the riches.

12. I desire fame. Let this occur: If I act well, I shall have the esteem of all my acquaintance. And what is all the rest to me?

These reflections are so obvious, that 'tis a wonder they occur not to every man: So convincing, that 'tis a wonder they persuade not every man. But perhaps they do occur to and persuade most men; when they consider human life, by a general and calm survey: But where any real, affecting incident happens; when passion is awakened, fancy agitated, example draws, and counsel urges; the philosopher is lost in the man, and he searches in vain for that persuasion, which before seemed so firm and unshaken. What remedy for this inconvenience? Assist yourself by a frequent perusal of the entertaining moralists: Have recourse to the learning of PLUTARCH, the imagination of LUCIAN, the eloquence of CICERO, the wit of SENECA, the gaiety of MONTAIGNE, the sublimity of SHAFTESBURY. Moral precepts, so couched, strike deep, and fortify the mind against the illusions of passion. But trust not altogether to external aid: By habit and study acquire that philosophic temper, which both gives force to reflection, and by rendering a great part of your happiness independant, takes off the edge from all disorderly passions, and tranquilizes the mind. Despise not these helps; but confide not too much in them neither; unless nature has been favourable in the temper, with which she has endowed you.

not

not always proportioned to the diſorder; but is greater or leſs, according to the greater or leſs ſenſibility of the part, upon which the noxious humours exert their influence. A *tooth-ach* produces more violent convulſions of pain than a *phthiſis* or a *dropſy*. In like manner, with regard to the conſtitution of the mind, we may obſerve, that all vice is indeed pernicious; but yet the diſturbance or pain is not meaſured out by nature with exact proportion to the degrees of vice, nor is the man of higheſt virtue, even abſtracting from external accidents, always the moſt happy. A gloomy and melancholy diſpoſition is certainly, *to our ſentiments*, a vice or imperfection; but as it may be accompanied with great ſenſe of honour and great integrity, it may be found in very worthy characters; tho' 'tis ſufficient alone to imbitter life, and render the perſon affected with it compleatly miſerable. On the other hand, a ſelfiſh villain may poſſeſs a ſpring and alacrity of temper, a certain *gaiety of heart*, which is indeed a good quality, but which is rewarded much beyond its merit, and when attended with good fortune, will compenſate the uneaſineſs and remorſe ariſing from all the other vices.

I ſhall add, as an obſervation to the ſame purpoſe, that if a man be liable to a vice or imperfection, it may often happen, that a good quality, which he poſſeſſes with it, will render him more miſerable, than if he were completely vicious. A perſon of ſuch imbecility of temper, as to be eaſily broke by affliction, is more unhappy for being endowed with a generous and friendly diſpoſition, which gives him a lively concern for others, and expoſes him the more to fortune and accidents. A ſenſe of ſhame, in an imperfect character, is certainly a virtue, but produces great uneaſineſs and remorſe, from which the abandoned villain is entirely free. A very amorous complexion, with a heart incapable of friend-

ſhip,

ſhip, is happier than the ſame exceſs in love, with a generoſity of temper, which tranſports a man beyond himſelf, and renders him a total ſlave to the object of his paſſion.

In a word, human life is more governed by fortune than by reaſon; is to be regarded more as a dull paſtime than as a ſerious occupation; and is more influenced by particular humour than by general principles. Shall we engage ourſelves in it with paſſion and anxiety? It is not worthy of ſo much concern. Shall we be indifferent about what happens? We loſe all the pleaſure of the game by our phlegm and careleſſneſs. While we are reaſoning concerning life, life is gone; and death, tho' *perhaps* they receive him differently, yet treats alike the fool and the philoſopher. To reduce life to exact rule and method, is commonly a painful, oft a fruitleſs occupation: And is it not alſo a proof, that we overvalue the prize for which we contend? Even to reaſon ſo carefully concerning it, and to fix with accuracy its juſt idea, would be over-valuing it, were it not that, to ſome tempers, this occupation is one of the moſt amuſing, in which life could poſſibly be employed.

ESSAY

ESSAY XIX.

Of POLYGAMY and DIVORCES.

AS marriage is an engagement entered into by mutual conſent, and has for its end the propagation of the ſpecies, 'tis evident, that it muſt be ſuſceptible of all the variety of conditions, which conſent eſtabliſhes, provided they be not contrary to this end.

A man, in conjoining himſelf to a woman, is bound to her according to the terms of his engagement: In begetting children, he is bound, by all the ties of nature and humanity, to provide for their ſubſiſtence and education. When he has performed theſe two parts of duty, no being can reproach him with injuſtice or injury. And as the terms of his engagement, as well as the methods of ſubſiſting his offspring, may be very various, 'tis mere ſuperſtition to imagine, that marriage can be entirely uniform, and will admit only of one mode or form. Did not human laws reſtrain the natural liberty of men, every particular marriage would be as different, as contracts or bargains of any other kind or ſpecies.

As circumſtances vary, and the laws propoſe different advantages, we find, that, in different times and places, they impoſe different conditions on this important contract. In TONQUIN 'tis uſual for the ſailors, when the ſhips come into the harbour, to marry for the ſeaſon; and,

and, notwithſtanding this precarious engagement, they are aſſured, 'tis ſaid, of the ſtricteſt fidelity to their bed, as well as in the whole management of their affairs from thoſe temporary ſpouſes.

I cannot, at preſent, recollect my authorities; but I have ſomewhere read, That the republic of ATHENS having loſt many of its citizens by war and peſtilence, allowed every man to marry two wives, in order the ſooner to repair the waſte which had been made by theſe calamities. The poet EURIPIDES happened to be coupled to two noiſy Vixens, who ſo plagued him with their jealouſies and quarrels, that he became ever after a profeſſed *woman-hater*; and is the only theatrical writer, perhaps the only poet, who ever entertained an averſion againſt the whole ſex.

In that agreeable romance, called *the Hiſtory of the* SEVARAMBIANS, where a great many men and a few women are ſuppoſed to be ſhipwrecked on a deſert coaſt; the captain of the troop, in order to obviate thoſe endleſs quarrels which aroſe, regulates their marriages after the following manner: he takes a handſome female to himſelf alone; aſſigns one to every couple of inferior officers; and to five of the loweſt rank he gives one wife in common. Could the greateſt legiſlator, in ſuch circumſtances, have contrived matters with greater wiſdom?

The ancient BRITONS had a very ſingular kind of marriage, which is to be met with among no other people. Any number of them, as ten or a dozen, joined in a ſociety together, which was perhaps requiſite for mutual defence in thoſe barbarous times. In order to link this ſociety the cloſer, they took an equal number of wives in common, and whatever children were born, were reputed to belong to all of them, and were accordingly provided for by the whole community.

Among the inferior creatures, nature herſelf, being the ſupreme legiſlator, preſcribes all the laws which regulate their marriages, and varies thoſe laws according to the different circumſtances of the creature. Where ſhe furniſhes, with eaſe, food and defence to the new-born animal, the preſent embrace terminates the marriage; and the care of the offspring is committed entirely to the female. Where the food is of more difficult purchaſe, the marriage continues for one ſeaſon, till the common progeny can provide for itſelf; and then the union immediately diſſolves, and leaves each of the parties free to enter into a new engagement at the enſuing ſeaſon. But nature having endowed man with reaſon, has not ſo exactly regulated every article of his marriage contract, but has left him to adjuſt them, by his own prudence, according to his particular circumſtances and ſituation. Municipal laws are a ſupply to the wiſdom of each individual; and, at the ſame time, by reſtraining the natural liberty of men, make the private intereſt ſubmit to the intereſt of the public. All regulations, therefore, on this head are equally lawful, and equally conformable to the principles of nature; tho' they are not all equally convenient, or equally uſeful to ſociety. The laws may allow of polygamy, as among the *Eaſtern* nations; or of voluntary divorces, as among the GREEKS and ROMANS; or they may confine one man to one woman, during the whole courſe of their lives, as among the modern EUROPEANS. It may not be diſagreeable to conſider the advantages and diſadvantages which reſult from each of theſe inſtitutions.

The advocates for polygamy may recommend it as the only effectual remedy for the furies and diſorders of love, and the only expedient for freeing men from that ſlavery to the females, which the natural violence of our paſſions has impoſed on us. By this means alone can we

regain

regain our right of ſovereignty; and, ſating our appetite, re-eſtabliſh the authority of reaſon in our minds, and, by conſequence, our own authority in our families. Man, like a weak ſovereign, being unable to ſupport himſelf againſt the wiles and intrigues of his ſubjects, muſt play one faction againſt another, and become abſolute by the mutual jealouſies of the females. *To divide and to govern* is an univerſal maxim; and by neglecting it, the EUROPEANS undergo a more grievous and a more ignominious ſlavery than the TURKS or PERSIANS, who are ſubjected indeed to a ſovereign, that lies at a diſtance from them, but in their domeſtic affairs rule with an uncontroulable ſway. An honeſt TURK, who ſhould come from his ſeraglio, where every one trembles before him, would be ſurprized to ſee SYLVIA in her drawing-room, adored by all the beaus and pretty fellows about town, and he would certainly take her for ſome mighty and deſpotic queen, ſurrounded by her guard of obſequious ſlaves and eunuchs.

On the other hand, it may be urged with better reaſon, that this ſovereignty of the male is a real uſurpation, and deſtroys that nearneſs of rank, not to ſay equality, which nature has eſtabliſhed between the ſexes. We are, by nature, their lovers, their friends, their patrons: Would we willingly change ſuch endearing appellations, for the barbarous titles of maſter and tyrant?

In what capacity ſhall we gain by this inhuman proceeding? As lovers, or as huſbands? The *lover*, is totally annhihilated; and courtſhip, the moſt agreeable ſcene in human life, can no longer have place, where women have not the free diſpoſal of themſelves, but are bought and ſold, like the meaneſt animals. The *huſband* is as little a gainer, having found the admirable ſecret of extinguiſhing every part of love, except its jealouſy. There is no roſe without its thorn; but he muſt be a fooliſh

fooliſh wretch indeed, who throws away the roſe and preſerves only the thorn.

I would not willingly inſiſt upon it as an advantage in our EUROPEAN cuſtoms, what was obſerved by MEHEMET EFFENDI the laſt TURKISH ambaſſador in FRANCE. *We* TURKS, ſays he, *are great ſimpletons in compariſon of the Chriſtians. We are at the expence and trouble of keeping a ſeraglio, each in his own houſe: But you eaſe yourſelves of this burden, and have your ſeraglio in your friends houſes.* The known virtue of our BRITISH ladies frees them ſufficiently from this imputation: And the TURK himſelf, had he travelled among us, muſt have owned, that our free commerce with the fair ſex, more than any other invention, embelliſhes, enlivens, and poliſhes ſociety.

But the ASIATIC manners are as deſtructive to friendſhip as to love. Jealouſy excludes men from all intimacies and familiarities with each other. No man dares bring his friend to his houſe or table, leſt he bring a lover to his numerous wives. Hence all over the eaſt, each family is as ſeparate from another, as if they were ſo many diſtinct kingdoms. No wonder then, that SOLOMON, living like an eaſtern prince, with his ſeven hundred wives, and three hundred concubines, without one friend, could write ſo pathetically concerning the vanity of the world. Had he tried the ſecret of one wife or miſtreſs, a few friends, and a great many companions, he might have found life ſomewhat more agreeable. Deſtroy love and friendſhip; what remains in the world worth accepting?

The bad education of children, eſpecially children of condition, is another unavoidable conſequence of theſe eaſtern inſtitutions. Thoſe, who paſs all the early part of life among ſlaves, are only qualified to be, themſelves,

ſelves, ſlaves and tyrants; and in every future intercourſe, either with their inferiors or ſuperiors, are apt to forget the natural equality of mankind. What attention, too, can it be ſuppoſed a parent, whoſe ſeraglio affords him fifty ſons, will give to the inſtilling principles of morality or ſcience into a progeny, with whom he himſelf is ſcarcely acquainted, and whom he loves with ſo divided an affection? Barbariſm, therefore, appears, from reaſon as well as experience, to be the inſeparable concomitant of polygamy.

To render polygamy more odious, I need not recount the frightful effects of jealouſy, and the conſtraint in which it holds the fair-ſex all over the eaſt. In thoſe countries men are not allowed to have any commerce with the females, not even phyſicians, when ſickneſs may be ſuppoſed to have extinguiſhed all wanton paſſions in the boſoms of the fair, and, at the ſame time, has rendered them unfit objects of deſire. TOURNEFORT tells us, That when he was brought into the *grand ſignior*'s ſeraglio as a phyſician, he was not a little ſurprized, in looking along a gallery, to ſee a great number of naked arms, ſtanding out from the ſides of the room. He could not imagine what this could mean; till he was told, that thoſe arms belonged to bodies, which he muſt cure, without knowing any more about them, than what he could learn from the arms. He was not allowed to aſk a queſtion of the patient, or even of her attendants, leſt he might find it neceſſary to enquire concerning circumſtances, which the delicacy of the ſeraglio allows not to be revealed. Hence the phyſicians in the eaſt pretend to know all diſeaſes from the pulſe; as our quacks in EUROPE undertake to cure a perſon merely from ſeeing his water. I ſuppoſe, had *Monſieur* TOURNEFORT been of this latter kind, he would not, in CONSTANTINOPLE, have been allowed by the jealous TURKS to be

be furniſhed with materials requiſite for exerciſing his art.

In another country, where polygamy is alſo allowed, they render their wives cripples, and make their feet of no uſe to them, in order to confine them to their own houſes. But it will, perhaps, appear ſtrange, that in an EUROPEAN country, where polygamy is not allowed, jealouſy can yet be carried to ſuch a height, that 'tis indecent ſo much as to ſuppoſe, that a woman of rank can have feet or legs. A SPANIARD is jealous of the very thoughts of thoſe who approach his wife; and, if poſſible, will prevent his being diſhonoured, even by the wantonneſs of imagination. Witneſs the following ſtory, which we have from very good authority †. When the mother of the late king of SPAIN was on her road towards MADRID, ſhe paſſed thro' a little town in SPAIN, famous for its manufactory of gloves and ſtockings. The honeſt magiſtrates of the place thought they could not better expreſs their joy for the reception of their new queen, than by preſenting her with a ſample of thoſe commodities, for which alone their town was remarkable. The *major-domo*, who conducted the princeſs, received the gloves very graciouſly: But when the ſtockings were preſented, he flung them away with great indignation, and ſeverely reprimanded the magiſtrates for this egregious piece of indecency. *Know*, ſays he, *that a queen of* SPAIN *has no legs.* The poor young queen, who, at that time, underſtood the language but imperfectly, and had been often frightened with ſtories of SPANISH jealouſy, imagined that they were to cut off her legs. Upon which ſhe fell a crying, and begged them to conduct her back to GERMANY; for that ſhe never could endure that operation: And it was with ſome difficulty

† *Memoirs de la cour d'*ESPAGNE *par Madame d'* AUNOY.

they could appeaſe her. PHILIP IV. is ſaid never in his life to have laughed heartily, but at the recital of this ſtory.

If a SPANISH lady muſt not be ſuppoſed to have legs, what muſt be ſuppoſed of a TURKISH lady? She muſt not be ſuppoſed to have a being at all. Accordingly, 'tis eſteemed a piece of rudeneſs and indecency at CONSTANTINOPLE, ever to make mention of a man's wives before him †. In EUROPE, 'tis true, fine bred people make it alſo a rule never to talk of their wives: But the reaſon is not founded on our jealouſy. I ſuppoſe it is becauſe we ſhould be apt, were it not for this rule, to become troubleſome to company, by talking too much of them.

The author of the PERSIAN letters has given a different reaſon for this polite maxim. *Men*, ſays he, *never care to mention their wives in company, leſt they ſhould talk of them before people, who are better acquainted with them than themſelves.*

Having rejected polygamy, and matched one man with one woman, let us now conſider what duration we ſhall aſſign to their union, and whether we ſhall admit of thoſe voluntary divorces, which were in uſe among the GREEKS and ROMANS. They who would defend this practice, may employ the following reaſons.

How often does diſguſt and averſion ariſe after marriage, from the moſt trivial accidents, or from an incompatibility of humour; where time, inſtead of curing the wounds proceeding from mutual injuries, feſters them every day the more, by new quarrels and reproaches? Let us ſeparate hearts, which are not made for each other. Each of them may, perhaps, find another, for

† *Memoires de Marquis d'* ARGENS.

which

which it is better fitted. At leaſt, nothing can be more cruel, than to preſerve, by violence, an union, which, at firſt, was made by mutual love, and is now, in effect, diſſolved by mutual hatred.

But the liberty of divorces is not only a cure to hatred and domeſtic quarrels: It is alſo an admirable preſervative againſt them, and the only ſecret for keeping alive that love, which firſt united the married couple. The heart of man delights in liberty: The very image of conſtraint is grievous to it: When you would confine it by violence, to what would otherwiſe have been its choice, the inclination immediately changes, and deſire is turned into averſion. If the public intereſt will not allow us to enjoy in polygamy that *variety*, which is ſo agreeable in love; at leaſt, deprive us not of that liberty, which is ſo eſſentially requiſite. In vain you tell me, that I had my choice of the perſon, with whom I would conjoin myſelf. I had my choice, 'tis true, of my priſon; but this is but a ſmall comfort, ſince it muſt ſtill be a priſon.

Such are the arguments, which may be urged in favour of divorces: But there ſeem to be theſe three unanſwerable objections againſt them: *Firſt*, What muſt become of the children, upon the ſeparation of the parents? Muſt they be committed to the care of a ſtepmother; and inſtead of the fond attention and concern of a parent, feel all the indifference or hatred of a ſtranger or an enemy? Theſe inconveniencies are ſufficiently felt, where nature has made the divorce by the doom inevitable to all mortals: And ſhall we ſeek to multiply theſe inconveniencies, by multiplying divorces, and putting it in the power of parents, upon every caprice, to render their poſterity miſerable?

Secondly, If it be true, on the one hand, that the heart of man naturally delights in liberty, and hates every

thing to which it is confined; 'tis alſo true, on the other hand, that the heart of man naturally ſubmits to neceſſity, and ſoon loſes an inclination, when there appears an abſolute impoſſibility of gratifying it. Theſe principles of human nature, you'll ſay, are contradictory: But what is man but a heap of contradictions! Tho' 'tis remarkable, that where principles are, after this manner, contrary in their operation, they do not always deſtroy each other; but the one or the other may predominate on any particular occaſion, according as circumſtances are more or leſs favourable to it. For inſtance, love is a reſtleſs and impatient paſſion, full of caprices and variations; ariſing in a moment from a feature, from an air, from nothing, and ſuddenly extinguiſhing after the ſame manner. Such a paſſion requires liberty above all things; and therefore ELOISA had reaſon, when, in order to preſerve this paſſion, ſhe refuſed to marry her beloved ABELARD.

How oft, when preſt to marriage, have I ſaid,
Curſe on all laws but thoſe which love has made:
Love, free as air, at ſight of human ties,
Spreads his light wings, and in a moment flies.

But *friendſhip* is a calm and ſedate affection, conducted by reaſon and cemented by habit; ſpringing from long acquaintance and mutual obligations; without jealouſies or fears, and without thoſe feveriſh fits of heat and cold, which cauſe ſuch an agreeable torment in the amorous paſſion. So ſober an affection, therefore, as friendſhip, rather thrives under conſtraint, and never riſes to ſuch a height, as when any ſtrong intereſt or neceſſity binds two perſons together, and gives them ſome common object of purſuit. Let us conſider then, whether love or friendſhip ſhould moſt predominate in marriage; and we ſhall ſoon determine whether liberty or conſtraint be moſt favourable

vourable to it. The happieſt marriages, to be ſure, are found where love, by long acquaintance, is conſolidated into friendſhip. Whoever dreams of raptures and extaſies beyond the honey-month, is a fool. Even romances themſelves, with all their liberty of fiction, are obliged to drop their lovers the very day of their marriage, and find it eaſier to ſupport the paſſion for a dozen years under coldneſs, diſdain and difficulties, than a week under poſſeſſion and ſecurity. We need not, therefore, be afraid of drawing the marriage-knot the cloſeſt poſſible. The friendſhip between the perſons, where it is ſolid and ſincere, will rather gain by it: And where it is wavering and uncertain, this is the beſt expedient for fixing it. How many frivolous quarrels and diſguſts are there, which people of common prudence endeavour to forget, when they lie under a neceſſity of paſſing their lives together; but which would ſoon be inflamed into the moſt deadly hatred, were they purſued to the utmoſt, under the proſpect of an eaſy ſeparation?

In the *third* place, we muſt conſider, that nothing is more dangerous than to unite two perſons ſo cloſely in all their intereſts and concerns, as man and wife, without rendering the union intire and total. The leaſt poſſibility of a ſeparate intereſt muſt be the ſource of endleſs quarrels and jealouſies. What Dr. PARNEL calls,

The little pilf'ring temper of a wife,

will be doubly ruinous; and the huſband's ſelfiſhneſs, being accompanied with more power, may be ſtill more dangerous.

Should theſe reaſons againſt voluntary divorces be eſteemed inſufficient, I hope no body will pretend to refuſe the teſtimony of experience. At the time when divorces were moſt frequent among the ROMANS, marriages were moſt rare; and AUGUSTUS was obliged, by

penal laws, to force the men of fashion into the married state: A circumstance which is scarce to be found in any other age or nation. The more ancient laws of ROME which prohibited divorces, are extremely praised by DIONYSIUS HALYCARNASSÆUS †. Wonderful was the harmony, says the historian, which this inseparable union of interests produced between married persons; while each of them considered the inevitable necessity by which they were linked together, and abandoned all prospect of any other choice or establishment.

The exclusion of polygamy and divorces sufficiently recommends our present EUROPEAN practice with regard to marriage.

† Lib. 2.

ESSAY

ESSAY XX.

Of Simplicity and Refinement in Writing.

FINE writing, according to Mr. Addison, conſiſts of ſentiments, which are natural, without being obvious. There cannot be a juſter, and more conciſe definition of fine writing.

Sentiments, which are merely natural, affect not the mind with any pleaſure, and ſeem not worthy of our attention. The pleaſantries of a waterman, the obſervations of a peaſant, the ribaldry of a porter or hackney coachman; all theſe are natural, and diſagreeable. What an inſipid comedy ſhould we make of the chit-chat of the tea-table, copied faithfully and at full length? Nothing can pleaſe perſons of taſte, but nature drawn with all her graces and ornaments, *la belle nature*; or if we copy low life, the ſtrokes muſt be ſtrong and remarkable, and muſt convey a lively image to the mind. The abſurd naivety of *Sancho Pancho* is repreſented in ſuch inimitable colours by Cervantes, that it entertains as much as the picture of the moſt magnanimous hero or ſofteſt lover.

The caſe is the ſame with orators, philoſophers, critics, or any author who ſpeaks in his own perſon, without introducing other ſpeakers or actors. If his language be not elegant, his obſervations uncommon, his ſenſe ſtrong and maſculine, he will in vain boaſt his nature and

and ſimplicity. He may be correct; but he never will be agreeable. 'Tis the unhappineſs of ſuch authors, that they are never blamed nor cenſured. The good fortune of a book, and that of a man, are not the ſame. The ſecret deceiving path of life, which HORACE talks of, *fallentis ſemita vitæ*, may be the happieſt lot of the one; but is the greateſt misfortune, which the other can poſſibly fall into.

On the other hand, productions, which are merely ſurpriſing, without being natural, can never give any laſting entertainment to the mind. To draw chimeras is not, properly ſpeaking, to copy or imitate. The juſtneſs of the repreſentation is loſt, and the mind is diſpleaſed to find a picture, which bears no reſemblance to any original. Nor are ſuch exceſſive refinements more agreeable in the epiſtolary or philoſophic ſtile, than in the epic or tragic. Too much ornament is a fault in every kind of production. Uncommon expreſſions, ſtrong flaſhes of wit, pointed ſimilies, and epigrammatic turns, eſpecially when they recur too frequently, are a diſfigurement, rather than any embelliſhment of diſcourſe. As the eye, in ſurveying a GOTHIC building, is diſtracted by the multiplicity of ornaments, and loſes the whole by its minute attention to the parts; ſo the mind, in peruſing a work overſtocked with wit, is fatigued and diſguſted with the conſtant endeavour to ſhine and ſurprize. This is the caſe where a writer overabounds in wit, even tho' that wit, in itſelf, ſhould be juſt and agreeable. But it commonly happens to ſuch writers, that they ſeek for their favourite ornaments, even where the ſubject affords them not; and by that means, have twenty inſipid conceits for one thought which is really beautiful.

There is no ſubject in critical learning more copious, than this of the juſt mixture of ſimplicity and refinement in writing; and therefore, not to wander in too large

large a field, I ſhall confine myſelf to a few general obſervations on that head.

Firſt, I obſerve, *That tho' exceſſes of both kinds are to be avoided, and tho' a proper medium ought to be ſtudied in all productions; yet this medium lies not in a point, but admits of a very conſiderable latitude.* Conſider the wide diſtance, in this reſpect, between Mr. POPE and LUCRETIUS. Theſe ſeem to lie in the two greateſt extremes of refinement and ſimplicity, in which a poet can indulge himſelf, without being guilty of any blameable exceſs. All this interval may be filled with poets, who may differ from each other, but may be equally admirable, each in his peculiar ſtile and manner. CORNEILLE and CONGREVE, who carry their wit and refinement ſomewhat farther than Mr. POPE (if poets of ſo different a kind can be compared together) and SOPHOCLES and TERENCE, who are more ſimple than LUCRETIUS, ſeem to have gone out of that medium, in which the moſt perfect productions are found, and to be guilty of ſome exceſs in theſe oppoſite characters. Of all the great poets, VIRGIL and RACINE, in my opinion, lie neareſt the center, and are the fartheſt removed from both the extremities.

My *ſecond* obſervation on this head is, *That it is very difficult, if not impoſſible, to explain by words, where the juſt medium between the exceſſes of ſimplicity and refinement lies, or to give any rule, by which we can know preciſely the bounds between the fault and the beauty.* A critic may diſcourſe not only very judiciouſly on this head, without inſtructing his readers, but even without underſtanding the matter perfectly himſelf. There is not a finer piece of criticiſm than *the diſſertation on paſtorals* by FONTENELLE; where, by a number of reflections and philoſophical reaſonings, he endeavours to fix the juſt medium, which is ſuitable to that ſpecies of writing. But let any one read the paſtorals of that author, and he will be convinced that

that this judicious critic, notwithſtanding his fine reaſonings, had a falſe taſte, and fixed the point of perfection much nearer the extreme of refinement than paſtoral poetry will admit of. The ſentiments of his ſhepherds are better ſuited to the toilettes of PARIS, than to the foreſts of ARCADIA. But this it is impoſſible to diſcover from his critical reaſonings. He blames all exceſſive painting and ornament as much as VIRGIL could have done, had *he* wrote a diſſertation on that ſpecies of poetry. However different the taſtes of men may be, their general diſcourſes on theſe ſubjects are commonly the ſame. No criticiſm can be very inſtructive, which deſcends not to particulars, and is not full of examples and illuſtrations. 'Tis allowed on all hands, that beauty, as well as virtue, lies always in a medium; but where this medium is placed, is the great queſtion, and can never be ſufficiently explained by general reaſonings.

I ſhall deliver it as a *third* obſervation on this ſubject, *That we ought to be more on our guard againſt the exceſs of refinement than that of ſimplicity; and that becauſe the former exceſs is both leſs* beautiful, *and more* dangerous *than the latter.*

'Tis a certain rule, that wit and paſſion are intirely inconſiſtent. When the affections are moved, there is no place for the imagination. The mind of man being naturally limited, 'tis impoſſible, that all its faculties can operate at once: And the more any one predominates, the leſs room is there for the others to exert their vigour. For this reaſon, a greater degree of ſimplicity is required in all compoſitions, where men, and actions, and paſſions are painted, than in ſuch as conſiſt of reflections and obſervations. And as the former ſpecies of writing is the more engaging and beautiful, one may ſafely, upon this account, give the preference to the extreme of ſimplicity above that of refinement.

We

We may alſo obſerve, that thoſe compoſitions, which we read the oftenеſt, and which every man of taſte has got by heart, have the recommendation of ſimplicity, and have nothing ſurprizing in the thought, when diveſted of that elegance of expreſſion, and harmony of numbers, with which it is cloathed. If the merit of the compoſition lies in a point of wit; it may ſtrike at firſt; but the mind anticipates the thought in the ſecond peruſal, and is no longer affected by it. When I read an epigram of MARTIAL, the firſt line recalls the whole; and I have no pleaſure in repeating to myſelf what I know already. But each line, each word in CATULLUS, has its merit; and I am never tired with the peruſal of him. 'Tis ſufficient to run over COWLEY once: But PARNEL, after the fiftieth reading, is as freſh as at the firſt. Beſides, 'tis with books, as with women, where a certain plainneſs of manner and of dreſs is more engaging than that glare of paint and airs and apparel, which may dazzle the eye, but reaches not the affections. TERENCE is a modeſt and baſhful beauty, to whom we grant every thing, becauſe he aſſumes nothing, and whoſe purity and nature make a durable, tho' not a violent impreſſion on us.

But refinement, as it is the leſs *beautiful*, ſo is it the more *dangerous* extreme, and what we are the apteſt to fall into. Simplicity paſſes for dulneſs, when it is not accompanied with great elegance and propriety. On the contrary, there is ſomething ſurprizing in a blaze of wit and conceit. Ordinary readers are mightily ſtruck with it, and falſely imagine it to be the moſt difficult, as well as moſt excellent way of writing. SENECA abounds with agreeable faults, ſays QUINTILIAN, *abundat dulcibus vitiis*; and for that reaſon is the more dangerous, and the more apt to pervert the taſte of the young and inconſiderate.

I ſhall

I shall add, that the excess of refinement is now more to be guarded against than ever; because 'tis the extreme which men are the most apt to fall into, after learning has made great progress, and after eminent writers have appeared in every species of composition. The endeavour to please by novelty leads men wide of simplicity and nature, and fills their writings with affectation and conceit. It was thus the ASIATIC eloquence degenerated so much from the ATTIC. It was thus the age of CLAUDIUS and NERO became so much inferior to that of AUGUSTUS in taste and genius: And perhaps there are, at present, some symptoms of a like degeneracy of taste, in FRANCE as well as in ENGLAND.

ESSAY

ESSAY XXI.

Of National Characters.

THE vulgar are very apt to carry all *national characters* to extremes; and having once eſtabliſhed it as a principle, that any people are knaviſh, or cowardly, or ignorant, they will admit of no exception, but comprehend every individual under the ſame character. Men of ſenſe condemn theſe undiſtinguiſhing judgments: Tho' at the ſame time, they allow, that each nation has a peculiar ſet of manners, and that ſome particular qualities are more frequently to be met with among one people than among their neighbours. The common people in SWISSERLAND have ſurely more probity than thoſe of the ſame rank in IRELAND; and every prudent man will, from that circumſtance alone, make a difference in the truſt which he repoſes in each. We have reaſon to expect greater wit and gaiety in a FRENCHMAN than in a SPANIARD; tho' CERVANTES was born in SPAIN. An ENGLISHMAN will naturally be ſuppoſed to have more knowledge than a DANE; tho' TYCHO BRAHE was a native of DENMARK.

Different reaſons are aſſigned for theſe *national characters*; while ſome account for them from *moral* and others from *phyſical* cauſes. By *moral* cauſes, I mean all circumſtances, which are fitted to work on the mind as motives or reaſons, and which render a peculiar ſet of manners

manners habitual to us. Of this kind are, the nature of the government, the revolutions of public affairs, the plenty or penury in which the people live, the ſituation of the nation with regard to its neighbours, and ſuch like circumſtances. By *phyſical* cauſes, I mean thoſe qualities of the air and climate, which are ſuppoſed to work inſenſibly on the temper, by altering the tone and habit of the body, and giving a particular complexion, which tho' reflexion and reaſon may ſometimes overcome, yet will it prevail among the generality of mankind, and have an influence on their manners.

That the character of a nation will very much depend on *moral* cauſes, muſt be evident to the moſt ſuperficial obſerver; ſince a nation is nothing but a collection of individuals, and the manners of individuals are frequently determined by theſe cauſes. As poverty and hard labour debaſe the minds of the common people, and render them unfit for any ſcience and ingenious profeſſion; ſo where any government becomes very oppreſſive to all its ſubjects, it muſt have a proportional effect on their temper and genius, and muſt baniſh all the liberal arts from among them. Inſtances of this nature are very frequent in the world.

The ſame principle of moral cauſes fixes the character of different profeſſions, and alters even that diſpoſition, which the particular members receive from the hand of nature. A *ſoldier* and a *prieſt* are different characters, in all nations, and all ages; and this difference is founded on circumſtances, whoſe operation is eternal and unalterable.

The uncertainty of their life makes ſoldiers laviſh and generous, as well as brave: Their idleneſs, together with the large ſocieties, which they form in camps or garriſons, inclines them to pleaſure and gallantry; By their frequent change of company, they acquire good breeding,

ing and an openneſs of behaviour: Being employed only againſt a public and an open enemy, they become candid, honeſt, and undeſigning: And as they uſe more the labour of the body than that of the mind, they are commonly thoughtleſs and ignorant *.

'Tis a trite, but not altogether a falſe maxim, that *prieſts of all religions are the ſame*; and tho' the character of the profeſſion will not, in every inſtance, prevail over the perſonal character, yet it is ſure always to predominate with a greater number. For as chymiſts obſerve, that ſpirits, when raiſed to a certain height, are all the ſame, from whatever materials they be extracted; ſo theſe men, being elevated above humanity, acquire a uniform character, which is intirely their own, and which, in my opinion, is, generally ſpeaking, not the moſt amiable that is to be met with in human ſociety. It is, in moſt points, oppoſite to that of a ſoldier; as is the the way of life, from which it is derived †.

As

* Tis a ſaying of MENANDER, Κομψὸς στρατιώτης, εἰδ' ἂν εἰ πᾶσιν θεοῖς οὐθεὶς γένοιτ' ἄν. MEN. apud STOBÆUM. *'Tis not in the power even of God to make a polite ſoldier.* The contrary obſervation with regard to the manners of ſoldiers takes place in our days. This ſeems to me a preſumption, that the ancients owed all their refinement and civility to books and ſtudy; for which, indeed, a ſoldier's life is not ſo well calculated. Company and the world is their ſphere. And if there be any politeneſs to be learned from company, they will certainly have a conſiderable ſhare of it.

† Tho' all mankind have a ſtrong propenſity to religion at certain times and in certain diſpoſitions; yet are there few or none, who have it to that degree, and with that conſtancy, which is requiſite to ſupport the character of this profeſſion. It muſt, therefore, happen, that clergymen, being drawn from the common maſs of mankind, as people are to other employments, by the views of profit, the greateſt part, tho' no atheiſts or free thinkers, will find it neceſſary, on particular occaſions, to feign more devotion than they are, at that time, poſſeſſed of, and to maintain the appearance of fervor and ſerioufneſs, even when jaded with the exerciſes of their religion, or when they have their minds engaged in the common occupations of life. They muſt not, like the reſt of the world, give ſcope to their natural move-

As to *physical causes*, I am inclined to doubt altogether of their operation in this particular; nor do I think, that

ments and sentiments: They must set a guard over their looks and words and actions: And in order to support the veneration paid them by the ignorant vulgar, they must not only keep a remarkable reserve, but must promote the spirit of superstition, by a continued grimace and hypocrisy. This dissimulation often destroys the candor and ingenuity of their temper, and makes an irreparable breach in their character.

If by chance any of them be possessed of a temper more susceptible of devotion than usual, so that he has but little occasion for hypocrisy to support the character of his profession; 'tis so natural for him to over-rate this advantage, and to think that it atones for every violation of morality, that frequently he is not more virtuous than the hypocrite. And tho' few dare openly avow those exploded opinions, *that every thing is lawful to the saints, and that they alone have property in their goods*; yet we may observe, that these principles lurk in every bosom, and represent a zeal for religious observances as so great a merit, that it may compensate for many vices and enormities. This observation is so common, that all prudent men are on their guard, when they meet with any extraordinary appearance of religion; tho' at the same time, they confess, that there are many exceptions to this general rule, and that probity and superstition are not altogether incompatible.

Most men are ambitious; but the ambition of other men may commonly be satisfied, by excelling in their particular profession, and thereby promoting the interests of society. The ambition of the clergy can often be satisfied only by promoting ignorance and superstition and implicit faith and pious frauds. And having got what ARCHIMEDES only wanted, (*viz.* another world, on which he could fix his engines) no wonder they move this world at their pleasure.

Most men have an over-weaning conceit of themselves; but *these* have a peculiar temptation to that vice, who are regarded with such veneration, and are even deemed sacred, by the ignorant multitude.

Most men are apt to bear a particular regard for members of their own profession; but as a lawyer, or physician, or merchant does, each of them, follow out his business apart, the interests of these professions are not so closely united as the interests of clergymen of the same religion; where the whole body gains by the veneration, paid to their common tenets, and by the suppression of antagonists.

Few men can bear contradiction with patience; but the clergy too often proceed even to a degree of fury on this article: Because all their credit

and

that men owe any thing of their temper or genius to the air, food, or climate. I confeſs, that the contrary opinion may juſtly, at firſt ſight, ſeem very probable; ſince we find, that theſe circumſtances have an influence over every other animal, and that even thoſe creatures, which are fitted to live in climates, ſuch as dogs, horſes,

and livelihood depend upon the belief, which their opinions meet with; and they alone pretend to a divine and ſupernatural authority, or have any colour for repreſenting their antagoniſts as impious and prophane. The *Odium Theologicum*, or Theological Hatred, is noted even to a proverb, and means that degree of rancour, which is the moſt furious and implacable.

Revenge is a very natural paſſion to mankind; but ſeems to reign with the greateſt force in prieſts and women: Becauſe being deprived of the immediate exertion of anger, in violence and combat, they are apt to fancy themſelves deſpiſed on that account; and their pride ſupports their vindictive diſpoſition.

Thus many of the vices of human nature are, by fixed moral cauſes, inflamed in that profeſſion; and tho' ſeveral individuals eſcape the contagion, yet all wiſe governments will be on their guard againſt the attempts of a ſociety, who will for ever combine into one faction, and while it acts as a ſociety, will for ever be actuated by ambition, pride, revenge, and a perſecuting ſpirit.

The temper of religion is grave and ſerious; and this is the character required of prieſts, which confines them to ſtrict rules of decency, and commonly prevents irregularity and intemperance amongſt them. The gaiety, much leſs the exceſſes, of pleaſure, is not permitted in that body; and this virtue is, perhaps, the only one, which they owe to their profeſſion. In religions, indeed, founded on ſpeculative principles, and where public diſcourſes make a part of religious ſervice, it may alſo be ſuppoſed that the clergy will have a conſiderable ſhare in the learning of the times; tho' 'tis certain that their taſte and eloquence will always be better than their ſkill in reaſoning and philoſophy. But whoever poſſeſſes the other noble virtues of humanity, meekneſs, and moderation, as very many of them, no doubt, do, is beholden for them to nature or reflection, not to the genius of his calling.

'Twas no bad expedient in the ROMANS, for preventing the ſtrong effect of the prieſtly character, to make it a law that no one ſhould be received into the ſacerdotal office, till he was paſt fifty years of age, DION. *Hal.* lib. 1. The living a layman till that age, 'tis preſumed, would be able to fix the character.

&c. do not attain the ſame perfection in all. The courage of bull-dogs and game-cocks ſeems peculiar to ENGLAND. FLANDERS is remarkable for large and heavy horſes: SPAIN for horſes light, and of good mettle. And any breed of theſe creatures, tranſported from one country into another, will ſoon loſe the qualities, which they derived from their native climate. It may be aſked, why not the ſame with men *?

There are few queſtions more curious than this, or which will occur oftener in our inquiries concerning human affairs; and therefore it may be proper to give it a ſerious examination.

The human mind is of a very imitative nature; nor is it poſſible for any ſet of men to converſe often together, without acquiring a ſimilitude of manners, and communicating to each other their vices as well as virtues. The propenſity to company and ſociety is ſtrong in all rational creatures; and the ſame diſpoſition, which gives us this propenſity, makes us enter deeply into each other's ſentiments, and cauſes like paſſions and inclinations to run, as it were by contagion, thro' the whole club or knot of companions. Where a number of men are united into one political body, the occaſions of their

* CÆSAR (*de Bell.* GALLICO, lib. 1.) ſays that the GALLIC horſes were very good; the GERMAN very bad. We find in lib. 7. that he was obliged to remount ſome GERMAN cavalry with GALLIC horſes. At preſent, no part of EUROPE has ſo bad horſes of all kinds as FRANCE: But GERMANY abounds with excellent war horſes. This may beget a little ſuſpicion, that even animals depend not on the climate; but on the different breeds, and on the ſkill and care in rearing them. The north of ENGLAND abounds in the beſt horſes of all kinds which are in the world. In the neighbouring counties, north ſide the TWEED, no good horſes of any kind are to be met with. STRABO, lib. 2. rejects, in a great meaſure, the influence of climate upon men. All is cuſtom and education, ſays he. It is not from nature, that the ATHENIANS are learned, the LACEDEMONIANS ignorant, and the THEBANS too, who are ſtill nearer neighbours to the former. Even the difference of animals, he adds, depends not on climate.

inter-

intercourſe muſt be ſo frequent, for defence, commerce, and government, that together with the ſame ſpeech or language, they muſt acquire a reſemblance in their manners, have a common or national character, as well as a perſonal one, peculiar to each individual. Now though nature produces all kinds of temper and underſtanding in great abundance, it follows not that ſhe always produces them in like proportions, and that in every ſociety the ingredients of induſtry and indolence, valour and cowardice, humanity and brutality, wiſdom and folly, will be mixed after the ſame manner. In the infancy of ſociety, if any of theſe diſpoſitions be found in greater abundance than the reſt, it will naturally prevail in the compoſition, and give a tincture to the national character. Or ſhould it be aſſerted, that no ſpecies of temper can reaſonably be preſumed to predominate, even in thoſe contracted ſocieties, and that the ſame proportions will always be preſerved in the mixture; yet ſurely the perſons in credit and authority, being ſtill a more contracted body, cannot always be preſumed to be of the ſame character; and their influence on the manners of the people, muſt, at all times, be very conſiderable. If on the firſt eſtabliſhment of a republic, a Brutus ſhould be placed in authority, and be tranſported with ſuch an enthuſiaſm for liberty and public good, as to overlook all the ties of nature, as well as private intereſt, ſuch an illuſtrious example will naturally have an effect on the whole ſociety, and kindle the ſame paſſion in every boſom. Whatever it be that forms the manners of one generation, the next muſt imbibe a deeper tincture of the ſame dye; men being more ſuſceptible of all impreſſions during infancy, and retaining theſe impreſſions as long as they remain in the world. I aſſert, then, that all national characters, where they depend not on fixed *moral* cauſes, proceed from ſuch accidents as theſe, and

that phyſical cauſes have no diſcernible operation on the human mind.

If we run over the whole globe, or revolve all the annals of hiſtory, we ſhall diſcover every where ſigns of this ſympathy or contagion of manners, none of the influence of air or climate.

Firſt. We may obſerve, that where a very extenſive government has been eſtabliſhed for many centuries, it ſpreads a national character over the whole empire, and communicates to every part a ſimilitude of manners. Thus the CHINESE have the greateſt uniformity of character imaginable; tho' the air and climate, in different parts of thoſe vaſt dominions, admit of very conſiderable variations.

Secondly. In ſmall governments, which are contiguous, the people have notwithſtanding a different character, and are often as diſtinguiſhable in their manners as the moſt diſtant nations. ATHENS and THEBES were but a ſhort day's journey from each other; tho' the ATHENIANS were as remarkable for ingenuity, politeneſs, and gaiety, as the THEBANS for dulneſs, ruſticity, and a phlegmatic temper. PLUTARCH, diſcourſing of the effects of air on the minds of men, obſerves, that the inhabitants of the PIRÆUM poſſeſſed very different tempers from thoſe of the higher town of ATHENS, which was diſtant about four miles from the former: But I believe no one attributes the difference of manners, in WAPPING and St. JAMES's, to a difference of air or climate.

Thirdly. The ſame national character commonly follows the authority of government to a preciſe boundary; and upon croſſing a river or paſſing a mountain, one finds a new ſet of manners, with a new government. The LANGUEDOCIANS and GASCONS are the gayeſt people

people of all FRANCE; but whenever you pass the PYRENEES, you are among SPANIARDS. Is it conceivable, that the qualities of the air should change so exactly with the limits of an empire, which depend so much on the accidents of battles, negociations, and marriages?

Fourthly. Where any set of men, scattered over distant nations, have a close society or communication together, they acquire a similitude of manners, and have but little in common with the nations amongst whom they live. Thus the JEWS in EUROPE, and the ARMENIANS in the east, have a peculiar character; and the former are as much noted for fraud, as the latter for probity *. The *Jesuits*, in all *Roman-catholic* countries, are also observed to have a character peculiar to themselves.

Fifthly. Where any accident, as a difference of language or religion, keeps two nations, inhabiting the same country, from mixing with each other, they will preserve, during several centuries, a distinct and even opposite set of manners. The integrity, gravity, and bravery of the TURKS, form an exact contrast to the deceit, levity, and cowardice of the modern GREEKS.

Sixthly. The same set of manners will follow a nation, and adhere to them over the whole globe, as well as the same laws and language. The SPANISH, ENGLISH, FRENCH and DUTCH colonies are all distinguishable even between the tropics.

* A small sect or society amidst a greater are commonly most regular in their morals; because they are more remarked, and the faults of individuals draw dishonour on the whole. The only exception to this rule is, when the superstition and prejudices of the large society are so strong as to throw an infamy on the smaller society, independent of their morals. For in that case, having no character either to save or gain, they become careless of their behaviour, except among themselves.

Seventhly. The manners of a people change very conſiderably from one age to another; either by great alterations in their government, by the mixtures of new people, or by that inconſtancy, to which all human affairs are ſubject. The ingenuity and induſtry of the ancient GREEKS have nothing in common with the ſtupidity and indolence of the preſent inhabitants of thoſe regions. Candour, bravery, and love of liberty, formed the character of the ancient ROMANS; as ſubtilty, cowardice, and a ſlaviſh diſpoſition do that of the modern. The old SPANIARDS were reſtleſs, turbulent, and ſo addicted to war, that many of them killed themſelves, when deprived of their arms by the ROMANS *. One would find an equal difficulty, at preſent, (at leaſt one would have found it fifty years ago) to rouze up the modern SPANIARDS to arms. The BATAVIANS were all ſoldiers of fortune, and hired themſelves into the ROMAN armies. Their poſterity make uſe of foreigners for the ſame purpoſe that the ROMANS did their anceſtors. Tho' ſome few ſtrokes of the FRENCH character be the ſame with that, which CÆSAR has aſcribed to the GAULS; yet what compariſon between the civility, humanity, and knowledge of the modern inhabitants of that country, and the ignorance, barbarity, and groſſneſs of the ancient? Not to inſiſt upon the great difference between the preſent poſſeſſors of BRITAIN, and thoſe before the ROMAN conqueſt; we may obſerve that our anceſtors, a few centuries ago, were ſunk into the moſt abject ſuperſtition, laſt century they were inflamed with the moſt furious enthuſiaſm, and are now ſettled into the moſt cool indifference with regard to religious matters, that is to be found in any nation of the world.

Eighthly. Where ſeveral neighbouring nations have a very cloſe communication together, either by policy, commerce, or travelling, they acquire a ſimilitude of

* TIT. LIVII, Lib. 34. Cap. 17.

manners,

manners, proportioned to the communication. Thus all the FRANKS appear to have a uniform character to the eaſtern nations. The differences among them are like the particular accents of different provinces, which are not diſtinguiſhable, except by an ear accuſtomed to them, and which commonly eſcape a foreigner.

Ninthly. We may often remark a wonderful mixture of manners and characters in the ſame nation, ſpeaking the ſame language, and ſubject to the ſame government: And in this particular the ENGLISH are the moſt remarkable of any people, that perhaps ever were in the world. Nor is this to be aſcribed to the mutability and uncertainty of their climate, or to any other *phyſical* cauſes; ſince all theſe cauſes take place in their neighbouring kingdom of SCOTLAND, without having the ſame effect. Where the government of a nation is altogether republican, it is apt to beget a particular ſet of manners. Where it is altogether monarchical, it is more apt to have the ſame effect; the imitation of ſuperiors ſpreading the national manners faſter among the people. If the governing part of a ſtate conſiſts altogether of merchants, as in HOLLAND, their uniform way of life will fix their character. If it conſiſts chiefly of nobles and landed gentry, like GERMANY, FRANCE, and SPAIN, the ſame effect follows. The genius of a particular ſect or religion is alſo apt to mould the manners of a people. But the ENGLISH government is a mixture of monarchy, ariſtocracy, and democracy. The people in authority are compoſed of gentry and merchants. All ſects of religion are to be found among them. And the great liberty and independency, which every man enjoys, allows him to diſplay the manners peculiar to him. Hence the ENGLISH, of any people in the univerſe, have the leaſt of a national character; unleſs this very ſingularity may ſtand for ſuch.

If the characters of men depended on the air and climate, the degrees of heat and cold ſhould naturally be expected to have a mighty influence; ſince nothing has a greater effect on all plants and irrational animals. And indeed there is ſome reaſon to think, that all the nations, which live between the polar circles or between the tropics, are inferior to the reſt of the ſpecies, and are utterly incapable of all the higher attainments of the human mind. The poverty and miſery of the northern inhabitants of the globe, and the indolence of the ſouthern, from their few neceſſities, may, perhaps, account for this remarkable difference, without our having recourſe to *phyſical* cauſes. This however is certain, that the characters of nations are very promiſcuous in the temperate climates, and that almoſt all the general obſervations, which have been formed of the more ſouthern or more northern nations in theſe climates, are found to be uncertain and fallacious *.

Shall we ſay, that the neighbourhood of the ſun inflames the imagination of men, and gives it a peculiar ſpirit and vivacity. The FRENCH, GREEKS, EGYP-

* I am apt to ſuſpect the negroes, and in general all the other ſpecies of men (for there are four or five different kinds) to be naturally inferior to the whites. There never was a civilized nation of any other complexion than white, nor even any individual eminent either in action or ſpeculation. No ingenious manufactures amongſt them, no arts, no ſciences. On the other hand, the moſt rude and barbarous of the whites, ſuch as the ancient GERMANS, the preſent TARTARS, have ſtill ſomething eminent about them, in their valour, form of government, or ſome other particular. Such a uniform and conſtant difference could not happen, in ſo many countries and ages, if nature had not made an original diſtinction betwixt theſe breeds of men. Not to mention our colonies, there are NEGROE ſlaves diſperſed all over EUROPE, of which none ever diſcovered any ſymptoms of ingenuity; tho' low people, without education, will ſtart up amongſt us, and diſtinguiſh themſelves in every profeſſion. In JAMAICA indeed they talk of one negroe as a man of parts and learning; but 'tis likely he is admired for very ſlender accompliſhments, like a parrot, who ſpeaks a few words plainly.

TIANS,

TIANS, and PERSIANS are remarkable for gaiety. The SPANIARDS, TURKS, and CHINESE are noted for gravity and a ſerious behaviour, without any ſuch difference of climate, as to produce this difference of temper.

The GREEKS and ROMANS, who called all other nations barbarians, confined genius and a fine underſtanding to the more ſouthern climates, and pronounced the northern nations incapable of all knowledge and civility. But BRITAIN has produced as great men, either for action or learning, as GREECE or ITALY has to boaſt of.

'Tis pretended, that the ſentiments of men become more delicate as the country approaches nearer the ſun; and that the taſte of beauty and elegance receives proportionable improvements in every latitude; as we may particularly obſerve of the languages, of which the more ſouthern are ſmooth and melodious, and the northern harſh and untuneable. But this obſervation holds not univerſally. The ARABIC is uncouth and diſagreeable: The MUSCOVITE ſoft and muſical. Energy, ſtrength, and harſhneſs form the character of the LATIN tongue: The ITALIAN is the moſt liquid, ſmooth, and effeminate language that can poſſibly be imagined. Every language will depend ſomewhat on the manners of the people; but much more on that original ſtock of words and ſounds, which they received from their anceſtors, and which remain unchangeable, even while their manners admit of the greateſt alterations. Who can doubt, but the ENGLISH are at preſent a much more polite and knowing people than the GREEKS were for ſeveral ages after the ſiege of TROY? Yet there is no compariſon between the language of MILTON and that of HOMER. Nay, the greater are the alterations and improvements, which happen in the manners of a people, the leſs can be expected in their language. A few eminent and refined geniuſes will

will communicate their taſte and knowledge to a whole people, and produce the greateſt improvements: But they fix the tongue by their writings, and prevent, in ſome degree, its farther changes.

Lord BACON has obſerved, that the inhabitants of the ſouth are, in general, more ingenious than thoſe of the north; but that, where the native of a cold climate has genius, he riſes to a higher pitch than can be reached by the ſouthern wits. This obſervation a late writer * confirms, by comparing the ſouthern wits to cucumbers, which are commonly all good of their kind; but at beſt are an inſipid fruit: While the northern genjuſes are like melons, of which not one in fifty is good; but when it is ſo, it has an exquiſite reliſh. I believe this remark may be allowed juſt, when confined to the EUROPEAN nations, and to the preſent age, or rather to the preceding one: But then I think it may be accounted for from moral cauſes. All the ſciences and liberal arts have been imported to us from the ſouth; and 'tis eaſy to imagine, that, in the firſt ardor of application, when excited by emulation and by glory, the few, who were addicted to them, would carry them to the greateſt height, and ſtretch every nerve, and every faculty, to reach the pinnacle of perfection. Such illuſtrious examples ſpread knowledge every where, and begot an univerſal eſteem for the ſciences: After which, 'tis no wonder, that induſtry relaxes; while men meet not with ſuitable encouragement, nor arrive at ſuch diſtinction by their attainments. The univerſal diffuſion of learning among a people, and the intire baniſhment of groſs ignorance and ruſticity, is, therefore, ſeldom attended with any remarkable perfection in particular perſons. It ſeems to be taken for granted in the dialogue *de Oratoribus*, that knowledge was much more common in VESPASIAN'S

* Dr. Berkeley: Minute Philoſopher.

age

age than in that of CICERO or AUGUSTUS. QUINCTILIAN alſo complains of the profanation of learning, by its becoming too vulgar. "Formerly," ſays JUVENAL, "ſcience was confined to GREECE and ITALY. Now the "whole world emulate ATHENS and ROME. Eloquent "GAUL has taught BRITAIN, knowing in the laws. "Even THULE entertains thoughts of hiring rhetoricians "for its inſtruction *." This ſtate of learning is remarkable; becauſe JUVENAL is himſelf the laſt of the ROMAN writers, who poſſeſſed any degree of genius. Thoſe, who ſucceeded, are valued for nothing but the matters of fact, of which they give us information. I hope the late converſion of MUSCOVY to the ſtudy of the ſciences will not prove a like prognoſtic to the preſent period of learning.

Cardinal BENTIVOGLIO gives the preference to the northern nations above the ſouthern with regard to candour and ſincerity; and mentions, on the one hand, the SPANIARDS and ITALIANS, and on the other, the FLEMINGS and GERMANS. But I am apt to think, that this has happened by accident. The ancient ROMANS ſeem to have been a candid ſincere people as are the modern TURKS. But if we muſt needs ſuppoſe, that this event has ariſen from fixed cauſes, we may only conclude from it, that all extremes are apt to concur, and are commonly attended with the ſame conſequences. Treachery is the uſual concomitant of ignorance and barbariſm; and if civilized nations ever embrace ſubtle and crooked politics, 'tis from an exceſs of refinement, which makes them diſdain the plain direct road to power and glory.

* "Sed Cantaber unde
Stoicus? antiqui præſertim ætate Metelli.
Nunc totus GRAIAS, noſtraſque habet orbis ATHENAS.
GALLIA cauſidicos docuit facunda BRITANNOS:
De conducendo loquitur jam rhetore THULE." Satyr. 15.

Moſt

Moſt conqueſts have gone from north to ſouth; and hence it has been inferred, that the northern nations poſſeſs a ſuperior degree of courage and ferocity. But it would have been juſter to have ſaid, that moſt conqueſts are made by poverty and want upon plenty and riches. The SARACENS, leaving the deſerts of ARABIA, carried their conqueſts northwards upon all the fertile provinces of the ROMAN empire; and met the TURKS half way, who were coming ſouthwards from the deſerts of TARTARY.

An eminent writer * has remarked, that all couragious animals are alſo carnivorous, and that greater courage is to be expected in a people, ſuch as the ENGLISH, whoſe food is ſtrong and hearty, than in the half-ſtarved commonalty of other countries. But the SWEDES, notwithſtanding their diſadvantages in this particular, are not inferior, in martial courage, to any nation that ever was in the world.

In general, we may obſerve, that courage, of all national qualities, is the moſt precarious; becauſe it is exerted only at intervals, and by a few in every nation; whereas induſtry, knowledge, civility, may be of conſtant and univerſal uſe, and for ſeveral ages, may become habitual to the whole people. If courage be preſerved, it muſt be by diſcipline, example and opinion. The tenth legion of CÆSAR, and the regiment of PICARDY in FRANCE were formed promiſcuouſly from among the citizens; but having once entertained a notion, that they were the beſt troops in the ſervice, this very opinion really made them ſuch.

As a proof how much courage depends on opinion, we may obſerve, that of the two chief tribes of the GREEKS, the DORIANS, and IONIANS, the former were

* Sir WILLIAM TEMPLE's account of the Netherlands.

always

always esteemed, and always appeared more brave and manly than the latter; tho' the colonies of both the tribes were interspersed and intermingled thro' all the extent of GREECE, the lesser ASIA, SICILY, ITALY, and the islands of the ÆGEAN sea. The ATHENIANS were the only IONIANS that ever had any reputation for valour or military atchievements; tho' even these were esteemed inferior to the LACEDEMONIANS, the bravest of the DORIANS.

The only observation, with regard to the differences of men in different climates, on which we can rest any weight, is the vulgar one, that people in the northern regions have a greater inclination to strong liquors, and those in the southern to love and women. One can assign a very probable *physical* cause for this difference. Wine and distilled spirits warm the frozen blood in the colder climates, and fortify men against the injuries of the weather: As the genial heat of the sun, in the countries exposed to his beams, inflames the blood, and exalts the passion between the sexes.

Perhaps too, the matter may be accounted for by *moral* causes. All strong liquors are rarer in the north, and consequently are more coveted. DIODORUS SICULUS* tells us, that the GAULS in his time were great drunkards, and much addicted to wine; chiefly, I suppose, from its rarity and novelty. On the other hand, the heat in the southern climates, obliging men and women to go half naked, thereby renders their frequent commerce more dangerous, and inflames their mutual passion. This makes parents and husbands more jealous and reserved; which still farther inflames the passion. Not to

* *Lib.* 5. The same author ascribes taciturnity to that people; a new proof that national characters may alter very much. Taciturnity, as a national character, implies unsociableness. ARISTOTLE in his Politics, book 2. chap. 9. says that the GAULS are the only warlike nation, who are negligent of women.

mention,

mention, that as women ripen ſooner in the ſouthern regions, 'tis neceſſary to obſerve greater jealouſy and care in their education; it being evident, that a girl of twelve cannot poſſeſs equal diſcretion to govern this paſſion, with one, who feels not its violence till ſhe be ſeventeen or eighteen.

Perhaps too, the fact is falſe, that nature has, either from moral or phyſical cauſes, diſtributed theſe different inclinations to the different climates. The ancient GREEKS, tho' born in a warm climate, ſeem to have been much addicted to the bottle; nor were their parties of pleaſure any thing but matches of drinking among the men, who paſſed their time altogether apart from the fair ſex. Yet when ALEXANDER led the GREEKS into PERSIA, a ſtill more ſouthern climate, they multiplied their debauches of this kind, in imitation of the PERSIAN manners *. So honourable was the character of a drunkard among the PERSIANS, that CYRUS the younger, ſoliciting the ſober LACEDEMONIANS for ſuccour againſt his brother ARTAXERXES, claims it chiefly on account of his ſuperior endowments, as more valorous, more bountiful, and a better drinker †. DARIUS HYSTASPES made it be inſcribed on his tomb-ſtone, among his other virtues and princely qualities, that no one could bear a greater quantity of liquor. You may obtain any thing of the NEGROES by offering them ſtrong drink; and may eaſily prevail with them to ſell, not only their parents, but their wives and miſtreſſes, for a caſk of brandy. In FRANCE and ITALY few drink pure wine, except in the greateſt heats of ſummer; and indeed, it is then almoſt as neceſſary, in order to recruit the ſpirits,

* BABYLONII *maxime in vinum, & quæ ebrietatem ſequuntur, effuſi ſunt.* QUINT. CUR. Lib. 5. Cap. 1.

† PLUT. SYMP. Lib. 1. Quæſt. 4.

eva-

evaporated by heat, as it is in SWEDEN, during the winter, in order to warm the bodies congealed by the rigour of the ſeaſon.

If jealouſy be regarded as a proof of an amorous diſpoſition, no people were more jealous than the MUSCOVITES, before their communication with EUROPE had ſomewhat altered their manners in this particular.

But ſuppoſing the fact true, that nature, by phyſical principles, has regularly diſtributed theſe two paſſions, the one to the northern, the other to the ſouthern regions; we can only infer, that the climate may affect the groſſer and more bodily organs of our frame; not that it can work upon thoſe finer organs, on which the operations of the mind and underſtanding depend. And this is agreeable to the analogy of nature. The races of animals never degenerate when carefully tended; and horſes, in particular, always ſhow their blood in their ſhape, ſpirit, and ſwiftneſs: But a coxcomb may beget a philoſopher; as a man of virtue may leave a worthleſs progeny.

I ſhall conclude this ſubject with obſerving, that tho' the paſſion for liquor be much more brutal and debaſing than love, which, when properly managed, is the ſource of all politeneſs and refinement; yet this gives not ſo great an advantage to the ſouthern climates, as we may be apt, at firſt ſight, to imagine. When love goes beyond a certain pitch, it renders men jealous, and cuts off the free intercourſe between the ſexes, on which the politeneſs of a nation will commonly much depend. And if we would ſubtilize and refine upon this point, we might obſerve, that nations, in very temperate climates, ſtand the faireſt chance for all ſorts of improvement; their blood not being ſo inflamed as to render them jealous, and yet being warm enough to make them ſet a due value on the charms and endowments of the fair ſex.

ESSAY XXII.

Of TRAGEDY.

IT ſeems an unaccountable pleaſure, which the ſpectators of a well wrote tragedy receive from ſorrow, terror, anxiety, and other paſſions, which are in themſelves diſagreeable and uneaſy. The more they are touched and affected, the more are they delighted with the ſpectacle; and as ſoon as the uneaſy paſſions ceaſe to operate, the piece is at an end. One ſcene of full joy and contentment and ſecurity is the utmoſt, that any compoſition of this kind can bear; and it is ſure always to be the concluding one. If in the texture of the piece, there be interwoven any ſcenes of ſatisfaction, they afford only faint gleams of pleaſure, which are thrown in by way of variety, and in order to plunge the actors into deeper diſtreſs, by means of that contraſt and diſappointment. The whole art of the poet is employed, in rouzing and ſupporting the compaſſion and indignation, the anxiety and reſentment of his audience. They are pleaſed in proportion as they are afflicted, and never are ſo happy as when they employ tears, ſobs, and cries to give vent to their ſorrow, and relieve their heart, ſwoln with the tendereſt ſympathy and compaſſion.

The few critics, who have had ſome tincture of philoſophy, have remarked this ſingular phænomenon, and have endeavoured to account for it.

L'abbe DUBOS, in his reflections on poetry and painting, aſſerts, that nothing is in general ſo diſagreeable to the mind as the languid, liſtleſs ſtate of indolence, into which it falls upon the removal of every paſſion and occupation. To get rid of this painful ſituation, it ſeeks every amuſement and purſuit; buſineſs, gaming, ſhews, executions; whatever will rouze the paſſions, and take its attention from itſelf. No matter what the paſſion is: Let it be diſagreeable, afflicting, melancholy, diſordered; it is ſtill better than that inſipid languor, which ariſes from perfect tranquillity and repoſe.

It is impoſſible not to admit this account, as being, at leaſt, in part ſatisfactory. You may obſerve, when there are ſeveral tables of gaming, that all the company run to thoſe, where the deepeſt play is, even tho' they find not there the beſt players. The view, or at leaſt, imagination of high paſſions, ariſing from great loſs or gain, affects the ſpectators by ſympathy, gives them ſome touches of the ſame paſſions, and ſerves them for a momentary entertainment. It makes the time paſs the eaſier with them, and is ſome relief to that oppreſſion, under which men commonly labour, when left intirely to their own thoughts and meditations.

We find, that common lyars always magnify, in their narrations, all kinds of danger, pain, diſtreſs, ſickneſs, deaths, murders, and cruelties; as well as joy, beauty, mirth, and magnificence. It is an abſurd ſecret, which they have for pleaſing their company, fixing their attention, and attaching them to ſuch marvellous relations, by the paſſions and emotions, which they excite.

There is, however, a difficulty of applying to the preſent ſubject, in its full extent, this ſolution, however ingenious and ſatisfactory it may appear. It is certain, that the ſame object of diſtreſs, which pleaſes in a tragedy, were it really ſet before us, would give the moſt unfeigned

unfeigned uneaſineſs; tho' it be then the moſt effectual cure of languor and indolence. Monſieur FONTENELLE ſeems to have been ſenſible of this difficulty; and accordingly attempts another ſolution of the phænomenon; at leaſt makes ſome addition to the theory above mentioned *.

"Pleaſure and pain," ſays he, "which are two "ſentiments ſo different in themſelves, differ not ſo "much in their cauſe. From the inſtance of tickling, "it appears, that the movement of pleaſure puſhed a "little too far, becomes pain; and that the movement "of pain, a little moderated, becomes pleaſure. Hence "it proceeds, that there is ſuch a thing as a ſorrow, ſoft "and agreeable: It is a pain weakened and diminiſhed. "The heart likes naturally to be moved and affected. "Melancholy objects ſuit it, and even diſaſtrous and "ſorrowful, provided they are ſoftened by ſome circum-"ſtance. It is certain, that on the theatre, the repre-"ſentation has almoſt the effect of reality; but yet it "has not altogether that effect. However we may be "hurried away by the ſpectacle; whatever dominion the "ſenſes and imagination may uſurp over the reaſon, "there ſtill lurks at the bottom a certain idea of falſe-"hood in the whole of what we ſee. This idea, tho' "weak and diſguiſed, ſuffices to diminiſh the pain "which we ſuffer from the misfortunes of thoſe whom "we love, and to reduce that affliction to ſuch a pitch "as converts it into a pleaſure. We weep for the miſ-"fortune of a hero, to whom we are attached. In the "ſame inſtant we comfort ourſelves, by reflecting, that "it is nothing but a fiction: And it is preciſely that "mixture of ſentiments, which compoſes an agreeable "ſorrow, and tears that delight us. But as that afflic-"tion, which is cauſed by exterior and ſenſible objects,

* Reflexions ſur la poetique, §. 36.

" is ſtronger than the conſolation which ariſes from an " internal reflection, they are the effects and ſymptoms " of ſorrow, which ought to prevail in the compo- " ſition."

This ſolution ſeems juſt and convincing; but perhaps it wants ſtill ſome new addition, in order to make it anſwer fully the phænomenon, which we here examine. All the paſſions, excited by eloquence, are agreeable in the higheſt degree, as well as thoſe which are moved by painting and the theatre. The epilogues of CICERO are, on this account chiefly, the delight of every reader of taſte; and it is difficult to read ſome of them without the deepeſt ſympathy and ſorrow. His merit as an orator, no doubt, depends much on his ſucceſs in this particular. When he had raiſed tears in his judges and all his audience, they were then the moſt highly delighted, and expreſſed the greateſt ſatisfaction with the pleader. The pathetic deſcription of the butchery made by VERRES of the SICILIAN captains is a maſter-piece of this kind: But I believe none will affirm, that the being preſent at a melancholy ſcene of that nature would afford any entertainment. Neither is the ſorrow here ſoftened by fiction: For the audience were convinced of the reality of every circumſtance. What is it then, which in this caſe raiſes a pleaſure from the boſom of uneaſineſs, ſo to ſpeak; and a pleaſure, which ſtill retains all the features and outward ſymptoms of diſtreſs and ſorrow?

I anſwer: This extraordinary effect proceeds from that very eloquence, with which the melancholy ſcene is repreſented. The genius required to paint objects in a lively manner, the art employed in collecting all the pathetic circumſtances, the judgment diſplayed in diſpoſing them; the exerciſe, I ſay, of theſe noble talents, together with the force of expreſſion, and beauty of oratorial numbers, diffuſe the higheſt ſatisfaction on the audience, and

and excite the moſt delightful movements. By this means, the uneaſineſs of the melancholy paſſions is not only overpowered and effaced by ſomething ſtronger of an oppoſite kind; but the whole movement of thoſe paſſions is converted into pleaſure, and ſwells the delight which the eloquence raiſes in us. The ſame force of oratory, employed on an unintereſting ſubject, would not pleaſe half ſo much, or rather would appear altogether ridiculous; and the mind, being left in abſolute calmneſs and indifference, would reliſh none of thoſe beauties of imagination or expreſſion, which, if joined to paſſion, give it ſuch exquiſite entertainment. The impulſe or vehemence, ariſing from ſorrow, compaſſion, indignation, receives a new direction from the ſentiments of beauty. The latter, being the predominant emotion, ſeize the whole mind, and convert the former into themſelves, or at leaſt, tincture them ſo ſtrongly as totally to alter their nature: And the ſoul, being, at the ſame time, rouzed by paſſion, and charmed by eloquence, feels on the whole a ſtrong movement, which is altogether delightful.

The ſame principle takes place in tragedy; with this addition, that tragedy is an imitation, and imitation is always of itſelf agreeable. This circumſtance ſerves ſtill farther to ſmooth the motions of paſſion, and convert the whole feeling into one uniform and ſtrong enjoyment. Objects of the greateſt terror and diſtreſs pleaſe in painting, and pleaſe more than the moſt beautiful objects, that appear calm and indifferent*. The affection rouzing the

* Painters make no ſcruple of repreſenting diſtreſs and ſorrow as well as any other paſſion: But they ſeem not to dwell ſo much on theſe melancholy affections as the poets, who, tho' they copy every emotion of the human breaſt, yet paſs very quickly over the agreeable ſentiments. A painter repreſents only one inſtant; and if that be paſſionate enough, it is ſure to affect and delight the ſpectator: But nothing can furniſh to the poet a variety of ſcenes and incidents and ſentiments, except diſtreſs, terror, or anxiety. Compleat joy and ſatisfaction is attended with ſecurity, and leaves no farther room for action.

mind, excites a large ſtock of ſpirit and vehemence; which is all transformed into pleaſure by the force of the prevailing movement. It is thus the fiction of tragedy ſoftens the paſſion, by an infuſion of a new feeling, not merely by weakening or diminiſhing the ſorrow. You may by degrees weaken a real ſorrow, till it totally diſappears; yet in none of its gradations will it ever give pleaſure; except, perhaps, by accident, to a man ſunk under lethargic indolence, whom it rouzes from that languid ſtate.

To confirm this theory, it will be ſufficient to produce other inſtances, where the ſubordinate movement is converted into the predominant, and gives force to it, tho' of a different, and even ſometimes tho' of a contrary nature.

Novelty naturally rouzes the mind, and attracts our attention; and the movements, which it cauſes, are always converted into any paſſion, belonging to the object, and join their force to it. Whether an event excites joy or ſorrow, pride or ſhame, anger or good-will, it is ſure to produce a ſtronger affection, when new or unuſual. And tho' novelty of itſelf be agreeable, it enforces the painful, as well as agreeable paſſions.

Had you any intention to move a perſon extremely by the narration of any event, the beſt method of increaſing its effect would be artfully to delay informing him of it, and firſt excite his curioſity and impatience before you let him into the ſecret. This is the artifice practiſed by IAGO in the famous ſcene of SHAKESPEARE; and every ſpectator is ſenſible, that OTHELLO's jealouſy acquires additional force from his preceding impatience, and that the ſubordinate paſſion is here readily transformed into the predominant.

Difficulties increaſe paſſions of every kind; and by rouſing our attention, and exciting our active powers, they

they produce an emotion, which nouriſhes the prevailing affection.

Parents commonly love that child moſt, whoſe ſickly infirm frame of body has occaſioned them the greateſt pains, trouble, and anxiety, in rearing him. The agreeable ſentiment of affection here acquires force from ſentiments of uneaſineſs.

Nothing endears ſo much a friend as ſorrow for his death. The pleaſure of his company has not ſo powerful an influence.

Jealouſy is a painful paſſion; yet, without ſome ſhare of it, the agreeable affection of love has difficulty to ſubſiſt in its full force and violence. Abſence is alſo a great ſource of complaint amongſt lovers, and gives them the greateſt uneaſineſs: Yet nothing is more favourable to their mutual paſſion than ſhort intervals of that kind. And if long intervals be pernicious, it is only becauſe, thro' time, men are accuſtomed to them, and they ceaſe to give uneaſineſs. Jealouſy and abſence in love compoſe the *dolce piccante* of the ITALIANS, which they ſuppoſe ſo eſſential to all pleaſure.

There is a fine obſervation of the elder PLINY, which illuſtrates the principle here inſiſted on. *It is very remarkable*, ſays he, *that the laſt works of celebrated artiſts, which they left imperfect, are always the moſt prized, ſuch as the* IRIS *of* ARISTIDES, *the* TYNDARIDES *of* NICOMACHUS, *the* MEDEA *of* TIMOMACHUS, *and the* VENUS *of* APELLES. *Theſe are valued even above their finiſhed productions: The broken lineaments of the piece, and the half formed idea of the painter are carefully ſtudied; and our very grief for that curious hand, which had been ſtopped by death, is an additional increaſe to our pleaſure* *.

THESE

* Illud vero perquam rarum ac memoria dignum, etiam ſuprema opera artificum, imperfectaſque tabulas, ſicut, IRIN ARISTIDIS, TYNDARIDAS NICOMACHI,

These instances (and many more might be collected) are sufficient to afford us some insight into the analogy of nature, and to show us, that the pleasure, which poets, orators, and musicians give us, by exciting grief, sorrow, indignation, compassion, is not so extraordinary nor paradoxical, as it may at first sight appear. The force of imagination, the energy of expression, the power of numbers, the charms of imitation; all these are naturally, of themselves, delightful to the mind: And when the object presented lays also hold of some affection, the pleasure still rises upon us, by the conversion of this subordinate movement into that which is predominant. The passion, tho', perhaps, naturally, and when excited by the simple appearance of a real object, it may be painful; yet is so smoothed, and softened, and mollified, when raised by the finer arts, that it affords the highest entertainment.

To confirm this reasoning, we may observe, that if the movements of the imagination be not predominant above those of the passion, a contrary effect follows; and the former, being now subordinate, is converted into the latter, and still farther increases the pain and affliction of the sufferer.

Who could ever think of it as a good expedient for comforting an afflicted parent, to exaggerate, with all the force of oratory, the irreparable loss, which he has met with by the death of a favourite child? The more power of imagination and expression you here employ, the more you increase his despair and affliction.

NICOMACHI, MEDEAM TIMOMACHI, & quam diximus VENEREM APELLIS, in majori admiratione esse quam perfecta. Quippe in iis lineamenta reliqua, ipsæque cogitationes artificum spectantur, atque in lenocinio commendationis dolor est manus, cum id ageret, extinctæ. Lib. xxxv. Cap. 11.

THE

The ſhame, confuſion, and terror of VERRES, no doubt, roſe in proportion to the noble eloquence and vehemence of CICERO: So alſo did his pain and uneaſineſs. Theſe former paſſions were too ſtrong for the pleaſure ariſing from the beauties of elocution; and operated, tho' from the ſame principle, yet in a contrary manner, to the ſympathy, compaſſion, and indignation of the audience.

Lord CLARENDON, when he approaches the cataſtrophe of the royal party, ſuppoſes, that his narration muſt then become infinitely diſagreeable; and he hurries over the king's death, without giving us one circumſtance of it. He conſiders it as too horrid a ſcene to be contemplated with any ſatisfaction, or even without the utmoſt pain and averſion. He himſelf, as well as the readers of that age, were too deeply concerned in the events, and felt a pain from ſubjects, which an hiſtorian and a reader of another age would regard as the moſt pathetic and moſt intereſting, and, by conſequence, the moſt agreeable.

An action, repreſented in tragedy, may be too bloody and atrocious. It may excite ſuch movements of horror as will not ſoften into pleaſure; and the greateſt energy of expreſſion, beſtowed on deſcriptions of that nature, ſerves only to augment our uneaſineſs. Such is that action, repreſented in the *Ambitious Step-mother*, where a venerable old man, raiſed to the height of fury and deſpair, ruſhes againſt a pillar, and ſtriking his head upon it, beſmears it all over with mingled brains and gore. The ENGLISH theatre abounds too much with ſuch images.

Even the common ſentiments of compaſſion require to be ſoftened by ſome agreeable affection, in order to give a thorough ſatisfaction to the audience. The mere ſuffering of plaintive virtue, under the triumphant tyranny and

and oppreſſion of vice, forms a diſagreeable ſpectacle, and is carefully avoided by all maſters of the drama. In order to diſmiſs the audience with intire ſatisfaction and contentment, the virtue muſt either convert itſelf into a noble courageous deſpair, or the vice receive its proper puniſhment.

Moſt painters appear in this light to have been very unhappy in their ſubjects. As they wrought much for churches and convents, they have chiefly repreſented ſuch horrible ſubjects as crucifixions and martyrdoms, where nothing appears but tortures, wounds, executions, and paſſive ſuffering, without any action or affection. When they turned their pencil from this ghaſtly mythology, they had recourſe commonly to OVID, whoſe fictions, tho' paſſionate and agreeable, are ſcarce natural or probable enough for painting.

The ſame inverſion of that principle, which is here inſiſted on, diſplays itſelf in common life, as in the effects of oratory and poetry. Raiſe ſo the ſubordinate paſſion that it becomes the predominant, it ſwallows up that affection, which it before nouriſhed and increaſed. Too much jealouſy extinguiſhes love: Too much difficulty renders us indifferent: Too much ſickneſs and infirmity diſguſts a ſelfiſh and unkind parent.

What ſo diſagreeable as the diſmal, gloomy, diſaſtrous ſtories, with which melancholy people entertain their companions? The uneaſy paſſion, being there raiſed alone, unaccompanied with any ſpirit, genius, or eloquence, conveys a pure uneaſineſs, and is attended with nothing that can ſoften it into pleaſure or ſatisfaction.

ESSAY

ESSAY XXIII.

Of the STANDARD of TASTE.

THE great variety of Taſtes, as well as of opinions, which prevail in the world, is too obvious not to have fallen under every one's obſervation. Men of the moſt confined knowledge are able to remark a difference of taſte in the narrow circle of their acquaintance, even where the perſons have been educated under the ſame government, and have early imbibed the ſame prejudices. But thoſe who can enlarge their view to contemplate diſtant nations and remote ages, are ſtill more ſurprized at the great inconſiſtence and contrariety. We are apt to call *barbarous* whatever departs widely from our own taſte and apprehenſion: But ſoon find the epithet of reproach retorted on us. And the higheſt arrogance and ſelf-conceit is at laſt ſtartled, on obſerving an equal aſſurance on all ſides, and ſcruples, amidſt ſuch a conteſt of ſentiments, to pronounce poſitively in its own favour.

As this variety of taſte is obvious to the moſt careleſs enquirer; ſo will it be found, on examination, to be ſtill greater in reality than in appearance. The ſentiments of men often differ with regard to beauty and deformity of all kinds, even while their general diſcourſe is the ſame. There are certain terms in every language, which import blame, and others praiſe; and all men, who uſe the ſame tongue, muſt agree in their ap-

application of them. Every voice is united in applauding elegance, propriety, ſimplicity, ſpirit in writing; and in blaming fuſtian, affectation, coldneſs, and a falſe brilliancy: But when critics come to particulars, this ſeeming unanimity vaniſhes; and it is found, that they had affixed a very different meaning to their expreſſions. In all matters of opinion and ſcience, the caſe is oppoſite: The difference among men is there oftner found to lie in generals than in particulars; and to be leſs in reality than in appearance. An explication of the terms commonly ends the controverſy; and the diſputants are ſurprized to find, that they had been quarrelling, while at bottom they agreed in their judgment.

Thoſe who found morality on ſentiment, more than on reaſon, are inclined to comprehend ethics under the former obſervation, and to ſuppoſe, that in all queſtions, which regard conduct and manners, the difference among men is really greater than at firſt ſight it appears. It is indeed obvious, that writers of all nations and all ages concur in applauding juſtice, humanity, magnanimity, prudence, veracity; and in blaming the oppoſite qualities. Even poets and other authors, whoſe compoſitions are chiefly calculated to pleaſe the imagination, are yet found, from HOMER down to FENELON, to inculcate the ſame moral precepts, and to beſtow their applauſe and blame on the ſame virtues and vices. This great unanimity is uſually aſcribed to the influence of plain reaſon; which, in all theſe caſes, maintains ſimilar ſentiments in all men, and prevents thoſe controverſies, to which the abſtract ſciences are ſo much expoſed. So far as the unanimity is real, the account may be admitted as ſatisfactory: But it muſt alſo be allowed that ſome part of the ſeeming harmony in morals may be accounted for from the very nature of language. The word, *virtue*, with its equivalent in every tongue, implies

plies praise; as that of *vice* does blame: And no one, without the most obvious and grossest impropriety, could affix reproach to a term, which in general use is understood in a good sense; or bestow applause, where the idiom requires disapprobation. HOMER's general precepts, where he delivers any such, will never be controverted; but it is very obvious, that when he draws particular pictures of manners, and represents heroism in ACHILLES and prudence in ULYSSES, he intermixes a much greater degree of ferocity in the former, and of cunning and fraud in the latter, than FENELON would admit of. The sage ULYSSES in the GREEK poet seems to delight in lies and fictions, and often employs them without any necessity or even advantage: But his more scrupulous son in the FRENCH epic writer exposes himself to the most imminent perils, rather than depart from the exactest line of truth and veracity.

The admirers and followers of the ALCORAN insist very much on the excellent moral precepts, which are interspersed throughout that wild performance. But it is to be supposed, that ARABIC words, which correspond to the ENGLISH, equity, justice, temperance, meekness, charity, were such as, from the constant use of that tongue, must always be taken in a good sense; and it would have argued the greatest ignorance, not of morals, but of language, to have mentioned them with any epithets, besides those of applause and approbation. But would we know, whether the pretended prophet had really attained a just sentiment of morals? Let us attend to his narration; and we shall soon find, that he bestows praise on such instances of treachery, inhumanity, cruelty, revenge, bigotry, as are utterly incompatible with civilized society. No steady rule of right seems there to be attended to; and every action is blamed or praised, so far only as it is beneficial or hurtful to the true believers.

The

The merit of delivering true general precepts in ethics is indeed very ſmall. Whoever recommends any moral virtues, really does no more than is implied in the terms themſelves. The people, who invented the word *charity*, and uſed it in a good ſenſe, inculcated more clearly and much more efficaciouſly, the precept, *be charitable*, than any pretended legiſlator or prophet, who ſhould inſert ſuch a *maxim* in his writings. Of all expreſſions, thoſe, which, together with their other meaning, imply a degree either of blame or approbation, are the leaſt liable to be perverted or miſtaken.

It is natural for us to ſeek a *Standard of Taſte*; a rule, by which the various ſentiments of men may be reconciled; or at leaſt, a deciſion afforded, confirming one ſentiment, and condemning another.

There is a ſpecies of philoſophy, which cuts off all hopes of ſucceſs in ſuch an attempt, and repreſents the impoſſibility of ever attaining any ſtandard of taſte. The difference, it is ſaid, is very wide between judgment and ſentiment. All ſentiment is right; becauſe ſentiment has a reference to nothing beyond itſelf, and is always real, wherever a man is conſcious of it. But all determinations of the underſtanding are not right; becauſe they have a reference to ſomething beyond themſelves, to wit, real matter of fact; and are not always conformable to that ſtandard. Among a thouſand different opinions which different men may entertain of the ſame ſubject, there is one, and but one, that is juſt and true; and the only difficulty is to fix and aſcertain it. On the contrary, a thouſand different ſentiments, excited by the ſame object, are all right: Becauſe no ſentiment repreſents what is really in the object. It only marks a certain conformity or relation between the object and the organs or faculties of the mind; and if that conformity did not really exiſt, the ſentiment could never poſſibly have a being.

Beauty

Beauty is no quality in things themſelves: It exiſts merely in the mind which contemplates them; and each mind perceives a different beauty. One perſon may even perceive deformity, where another is ſenſible of beauty; and every individual ought to acquieſce in his own ſentiment, without pretending to regulate thoſe of others. To ſeek the real beauty, or real deformity is as fruitleſs an enquiry, as to pretend to aſcertain the real ſweet or real bitter. According to the diſpoſition of the organs, the ſame object may be both ſweet and bitter; and the proverb has juſtly determined it to be fruitleſs to diſpute concerning taſtes. It is very natural, and even quite neceſſary, to extend this axiom to mental, as well as bodily taſte; and thus common ſenſe, which is ſo often at variance with philoſophy, eſpecially with the ſceptical kind, is found, in one inſtance at leaſt, to agree in pronouncing the ſame deciſion.

But though this axiom, by paſſing into a proverb, ſeems to have attained the ſanction of common ſenſe; there is certainly a ſpecies of common ſenſe which oppoſes it, or at leaſt ſerves to modify and reſtrain it. Whoever would aſſert an equality of genius and elegance between OGILBY and MILTON, or BUNYAN and ADDISON, would be thought to defend no leſs an extravagance, than if he had maintained a molehill to be as high as TENERIFFE, or a pond as extenſive as the ocean. Tho' there may be found perſons, who give the preference to the former authors; no one pays attention to ſuch a taſte; and we pronounce without ſcruple the ſentiment of theſe pretended critics to be abſurd and ridiculous. The principle of the natural equality of taſtes is then totally forgot; and while we admit of it on ſome occaſions, where the objects ſeem near an equality, it appears an extravagant paradox, or rather a palpable abſurdity, where objects ſo diſproportioned are compared together.

It is evident, that none of the rules of compoſition are fixed by reaſonings *a priori*, or can be eſteemed abſtract concluſions of the underſtanding, from comparing thoſe habitudes and relations of ideas, which are eternal and immutable. Their foundation is the ſame with that of all the practical ſciences, experience; nor are they any thing but general obſervations, concerning what has been univerſally found to pleaſe in all countries and in all ages. Many of the beauties of poetry and even of eloquence are founded on falſhood and fiction, on hyperboles, metaphors, and an abuſe or perverſion of expreſſions from their natural meaning. To check the ſallies of the imagination, and to reduce every expreſſion to geometrical truth and exactneſs, would be the moſt contrary to the laws of criticiſm; becauſe it would produce a work, which, by univerſal experience, has been found the moſt inſipid and diſagreeable. But tho' poetry can never ſubmit to exact truth, it muſt be confined by rules of art, diſcovered to the author either by genius or obſervation. If ſome negligent or irregular writers have pleaſed, they have not pleaſed by their tranſgreſſions of rule or order, but in ſpite of theſe tranſgreſſions: They have poſſeſſed other beauties, which were conformable to juſt criticiſm; and the force of theſe beauties has been able to overpower cenſure, and give the mind a ſatisfaction ſuperior to the diſguſt ariſing from the blemiſhes. ARIOSTO pleaſes; but not by his monſtrous and improbable fictions, by his bizarre mixture of the ſerious and comic ſtyles, by the want of coherence in his ſtories, or by the continual interruptions of his narration. He charms by the force and clearneſs of his expreſſion, by the readineſs and variety of his inventions, and by his natural pictures of the paſſions, eſpecially thoſe of the gay and amorous kind: And however his faults may diminiſh our ſatisfaction, they are not able entirely to deſtroy it. Did our pleaſure really ariſe from thoſe parts of his poem, which we denominate

nominate faults, this would be no objection to criticism in general: It would only be an objection to those particular rules of criticism, which would establish such circumstances to be faults, and would represent them as universally blameable. If they are found to please, they cannot be faults; let the pleasure, which they produce, be ever so unexpected and unaccountable.

But though all the general rules of art are founded only on experience and on the observation of the common sentiments of human nature, we must not imagine, that, on every occasion, the feelings of men will be conformable to these rules. Those finer emotions of the mind are of a very tender and delicate nature, and require the concurrence of many favourable circumstances to make them play with facility and exactness, according to their general and established principles. The least exterior hindrance to such small springs, or the least internal disorder, disturbs their motion, and confounds the operation of the whole machine. When we would make an experiment of this nature, and would try the force of any beauty or deformity, we must choose with care a proper time and place, and bring the fancy to a suitable situation and disposition. A perfect serenity of mind, a recollection of thought, a due attention to the object; if any of these circumstances be wanting our experiment will be fallacious, and we shall be unable to judge of the catholic and universal beauty. The relation, which nature has placed between the form and the sentiment, will at least be more obscure; and it will require greater accuracy to trace and discern it. We shall be able to ascertain its influence not so much from the operation of each particular beauty, as from the durable admiration, which attends those works, that have survived all the caprices of mode and fashion, all the mistakes of ignorance and envy.

The ſame HOMER, who pleaſed at ATHENS and ROME two thouſand years ago, is ſtill admired at PARIS and at LONDON. All the changes of climate, government, religion, and language, have not been able to obſcure his glory. Authority or prejudice may give a temporary vogue to a bad poet or orator; but his reputation will never be durable or general. When his compoſitions are examined by poſterity or by foreigners, the enchantment is diſſipated, and his faults appear in their true colours. On the contrary, a real genius, the longer his works endure, and the more wide they are ſpread, the more ſincere is the admiration which he meets with. Envy and jealouſy have too much place in a narrow circle; and even familiar acquaintance with his perſon may diminiſh the applauſe due to his performances: But when theſe obſtructions are removed, the beauties, which are naturally fitted to excite agreeable ſentiments, immediately diſplay their energy; and while the world endures, they maintain their authority over the minds of men.

It appears then, that amidſt all the variety and caprice of taſte, there are certain general principles of approbation or blame, whoſe influence a careful eye may trace in all operations of the mind. Some particular forms or qualities, from the original ſtructure of the internal fabric, are calculated to pleaſe, and others to diſpleaſe; and if they fail of their effect in any particular inſtance, it is from ſome apparent defect or imperfection in the organ. A man in a fever would not inſiſt on his palate as able to decide concerning flavours; nor would one, affected with the jaundice, pretend to give a verdict with regard to colours. In each creature, there is a ſound and a defective ſtate; and the former alone can be ſuppoſed to afford us a true ſtandard of taſte and ſentiment. If in the ſound ſtate of the organs, there be an entire or a conſiderable uniformity of ſentiment among men, we may

may thence derive an idea of the perfect beauty; in like manner as the appearance of objects in day-light to the eye of a man in health is denominated their true and real colour, even while colour is allowed to be merely a phantasm of the senses.

Many and frequent are the defects in the internal organs, which prevent or weaken the influence of those general principles, on which depends our sentiment of beauty or deformity. Tho' some objects, by the structure of the mind, be naturally calculated to give pleasure, it is not to be expected, that in every individual the pleasure will be equally felt. Particular incidents and situations occur, which either throw a false light on the objects, or hinder the true from conveying to the imagination the proper sentiment and perception.

One obvious cause, why many feel not the proper sentiment of beauty, is the want of that *delicacy* of imagination, which is requisite to convey a sensibility of those finer emotions. This delicacy every one pretends to: Every one talks of it; and would reduce every kind of taste or sentiment to its standard. But as our intention in this dissertation is to mingle some light of the understanding with the feelings of sentiment, it will be proper to give a more accurate definition of delicacy, than has hitherto been attempted. And not to draw our philosophy from too profound a source, we shall have recourse to a noted story in Don QUIXOTE.

'Tis with good reason, says SANCHO to the squire with the great nose, that I pretend to have a judgment in wine: This is a quality hereditary in our family. Two of my kinsmen were once called to give their opinion of a hogshead, which was supposed to be excellent, being old and of a good vintage. One of them tastes it; considers it, and after mature reflection pronounces the wine

to be good, were it not for a ſmall taſte of leather, which he perceived in it. The other, after uſing the ſame precautions, gives alſo his verdict in favour of the wine; but with the reſerve of a taſte of iron, which he could eaſily diſtinguiſh. You cannot imagine how much they were both ridiculed for their judgment. But who laughed in the end? On emptying the hogſhead, there was found at the bottom, an old key with a leathern thong tied to it.

The great reſemblance between mental and bodily taſte will eaſily teach us to apply this ſtory. Tho' it be certain, that beauty and deformity, no more than ſweet and bitter, are not qualities in objects, but belong entirely to the ſentiment, internal or external; it muſt be allowed, that there are certain qualities in objects, which are fitted by nature to produce thoſe particular feelings. Now as theſe qualities may be found in a ſmall degree or may be mixed and confounded with each other, it often happens, that the taſte is not affected with ſuch minute qualities, or is not able to diſtinguiſh all the particular flavours, amidſt the diſorder, in which they are preſented. Where the organs are ſo fine, as to allow nothing to eſcape them; and at the ſame time ſo exact as to perceive every ingredient in the compoſition: This we call delicacy of taſte, whether we employ theſe terms in the natural or metaphorical ſenſe. Here then the general rules of beauty are of uſe; being drawn from eſtabliſhed models, and from the obſervation of what pleaſes or diſpleaſes, when preſented ſingly and in a high degree: And if the ſame qualities, in a continued compoſition and in a ſmaller degree, affect not the organs with a ſenſible delight or uneaſineſs, we exclude the perſon from all pretenſions to this delicacy. To produce theſe general rules or avowed patterns of compoſition is like finding the key with the leathern thong; which

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juſtified the verdict of SANCHO's kinſmen, and confounded thoſe pretended judges who had condemned them. Tho' the hogſhead had never been emptied, the taſte of the one was ſtill equally delicate, and that of the other equally dull and languid: But it would have been more difficult to have proved the ſuperiority of the former, to the conviction of every by-ſtander. In like manner, tho' the beauties of writing had never been methodized, or reduced to general principles; tho' no excellent models had ever been acknowledged; the different degrees of taſte would ſtill have ſubſiſted, and the judgment of one man been preferable to that of another; but it would not have been ſo eaſy to ſilence the bad critic, who might always inſiſt upon his particular ſentiment, and refuſe to ſubmit to his antagoniſt. But when we ſhow him an avowed principle of art; when we illuſtrate this principle by examples, whoſe operation, from his own particular taſte, he acknowledges to be conformable to the principle; when we prove, that the ſame principle may be applied to the preſent caſe, where he did not perceive nor feel its influence: He muſt conclude, upon the whole, that the fault lies in himſelf, and that he wants the delicacy, which is requiſite to make him ſenſible of every beauty and every blemiſh, in any compoſition or diſcourſe.

'Tis acknowledged to be the perfection of every ſenſe or faculty, to perceive with exactneſs its moſt minute objects, and allow nothing to eſcape its notice and obſervation. The ſmaller the objects are, which become ſenſible to the eye, the finer is that organ, and the more elaborate its make and compoſition. A good palate is not tried by ſtrong flavours; but by a mixture of ſmall ingredients, where we are ſtill ſenſible of each part, notwithſtanding its minuteneſs and its confuſion with the reſt. In like manner, a quick and acute perception of

beauty and deformity muſt be the perfection of our mental taſte, nor can a man be ſatisfied with himſelf while he ſuſpects, that any excellence or blemiſh in a diſcourſe has paſſed him unobſerved. In this caſe, the perfection of the man, and the perfection of the ſenſe or feeling, are found to be united. A very delicate palate, on many occaſions, may be a great inconvenience both to a man himſelf and to his friends: but a delicate taſte of wit or beauty muſt always be a deſireable quality; becauſe it is the ſource of all the fineſt and moſt innocent enjoyments, of which human nature is ſuſceptible. In this deciſion, the ſentiments of all mankind are agreed. Wherever you can fix or aſcertain a delicacy of taſte, it is ſure to be approved of; and the beſt way of fixing it is to appeal to thoſe models and principles, which have been eſtabliſhed by the uniform approbation and experience of nations and ages.

But tho' there be naturally a very wide difference in point of delicacy between one perſon and another, nothing tends further to encreaſe and improve this talent, than *practice* in a particular art, and the frequent ſurvey or contemplation of a particular ſpecies of beauty. When objects of any kind are firſt preſented to the eye or imagination, the ſentiment, which attends them, is obſcure and confuſed; and the mind is, in a great meaſure, incapable of pronouncing concerning their merits or defects. The taſte cannot perceive the ſeveral excellencies of the performance; much leſs diſtinguiſh the particular character of each excellency, and aſcertain its quality and degree. If it pronounce the whole in general to be beautiful or deformed, 'tis the utmoſt which can be expected; and even this judgment a perſon, ſo unpractiſed, will be apt to deliver with great heſitation and reſerve. But allow him to acquire experience in thoſe objects, his feeling becomes more exact and nice;

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He not only perceives the beauties and defects of each part, but marks the diſtinguiſhing ſpecies of each quality, and aſſigns it ſuitable praiſe or blame. A clear and diſtinct ſentiment attends him through the whole ſurvey of the objects; and he diſcerns that very degree and kind of approbation or diſpleaſure, which each part is naturally fitted to produce. The miſt diſſipates, which ſeemed formerly to hang over the object: The organ acquires greater perfection in its operations; and can pronounce, without danger of miſtake, concerning the merits of each performance. In a word, the ſame addreſs and dexterity, which practice gives to the execution of any work, is alſo acquired, by the ſame means, in the judging of it.

So advantageous is practice to the diſcernment of beauty, that before we can pronounce judgment on any work of importance, it will even be requiſite, that that very individual performance be more than once peruſed by us, and be ſurveyed in different lights with attention and deliberation. There is a flutter or hurry of thought, which attends the firſt peruſal of any piece, and which confounds the genuine ſentiment of beauty. The reference of the parts is not diſcerned: The true characters of ſtyle are little diſtinguiſhed: The ſeveral perfections and defects ſeem wrapped up in a ſpecies of confuſion, and preſent themſelves indiſtinctly to the imagination. Not to mention, that there is a ſpecies of beauty, which, as it is florid and ſuperficial, pleaſes at firſt; but being found incompatible with a juſt expreſſion either of reaſon or paſſion, ſoon palls upon the taſte, and is then rejected with diſdain, at leaſt rated at a much lower value.

It is impoſſible to continue in the practice of contemplating any order of beauty, without being frequently obliged to form *compariſons* between the ſeveral ſpecies and degrees of excellency, and eſtimating their proportion

tion to each other. A man, who has had no opportunity of comparing the different kinds of beauty, is indeed totally unqualified to pronounce an opinion with regard to any object presented to him. By comparison alone we fix the epithets of praise or blame, and learn how to assign the due degree of each. The coarsest dawbing of a sign-post contains a certain lustre of colours and exactness of imitation, which are so far beauties, and would affect the mind of a peasant or Indian with the highest admiration. The most vulgar ballads are not entirely destitute of harmony or nature; and none but a person, familiarized to superior beauties, would pronounce their numbers harsh, or narration uninteresting. A great inferiority of beauty gives pain to a person conversant in the highest excellency of the kind, and is for that reason pronounced a deformity: As the most finished object, with which we are acquainted, is naturally supposed to have reached the pinnacle of perfection, and to be entitled to the highest applause. A man, who has had opportunities of seeing, and examining and weighing the several performances, admired in different ages and nations, can alone rate the merits of a work exhibited to his view, and assign its proper rank among the productions of genius.

But to enable him the more fully to execute this undertaking, he must preserve his mind free from all *prejudice*, and allow nothing to enter into his consideration, but the very object, which is submitted to his examination. We may observe, that every work of art, in order to produce its due effect on the mind, must be surveyed in a certain point of view, and cannot be fully relished by persons, whose situation, real or imaginary, is not conformable to that required by the performance. An orator addresses himself to a particular audience, and must have a regard to their particular genius, interests, opinions,

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and prejudices; otherwiſe he hopes eir reſolutions, and inflame their afey even have entertained ſome preim, however unreaſonable, he muſt dvantage; but before he enters upon the ſubject, muſt endeavour to conciliate their affection, and acquire their good graces. A critic of a different age or nation, who ſhould peruſe this diſcourſe, muſt have all theſe circumſtances in his eye, and muſt place himſelf in the ſame ſituation as the audience, in order to form a true judgment of the oration. In like manner, when any work is addreſſed to the public, tho' I ſhould have a friendſhip or enmity with the author, I muſt depart from this particular ſituation; and conſidering myſelf as a man in general, forget, if poſſible, my individual being and my peculiar circumſtances. A perſon, influenced by prejudice, complies not with this condition; but obſtinately maintains his natural poſition, without entering into that required by the performance. If the work be addreſſed to perſons of a different age or nation, he makes no allowance for their peculiar views and prejudices; but full of the manners of his own times, raſhly condemns what ſeemed admirable in the eyes of thoſe for whom alone the diſcourſe was calculated. If the work be executed for the public, he never ſufficiently enlarges his comprehenſion, or forgets his intereſt as a friend or enemy, as a rival or commentator. By this means, his ſentiments are perverted; nor have the ſame beauties and blemiſhes the ſame influence upon him, as if he had impoſed a proper violence on his imagination, and had forgot himſelf for a moment. So far his taſte evidently departs from the true ſtandard; and of conſequence loſes all credit and authority.

It is well known, that, in all queſtions, ſubmitted to the underſtanding, prejudice is moſt deſtructive of ſound judg-

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judgment, and perverts all operations of the intellectual faculties: It is no leſs contrary to good taſte; nor has it leſs influence to corrupt our ſentiments of beauty. It belongs to *good ſenſe* to check its influence in both caſes; and in this reſpect, as well as in many others, reaſon, if not an eſſential part of taſte, is at leaſt requiſite to the operations of this latter faculty. In all the nobler productions of genius, there is a mutual relation and correſpondence of parts; nor can either the beauties or blemiſhes be perceived by him, whoſe thought is not capacious enough to comprehend all thoſe parts, and compare them with each other, in order to perceive the conſiſtence and uniformity of the whole. Every work of art has alſo a certain end or purpoſe, for which it is calculated; and is to be deemed more or leſs perfect, as it is more or leſs fitted to attain this end. The object of eloquence is to perſuade, of hiſtory to inſtruct, of poetry to pleaſe by means of the paſſions and the imagination. Theſe ends we muſt carry conſtantly in our view, when we peruſe any performance; and we muſt be able to judge how far the means employed are adapted to their reſpective purpoſes. Beſides, every kind of compoſition, even the moſt poetical, is nothing but a chain of propoſitions and reaſonings; not always indeed the juſteſt and moſt exact, but ſtill plauſible and ſpecious, however diſguiſed by the colouring of the imagination. The perſons, introduced in tragedy and epic poetry, muſt be repreſented as reaſoning and thinking, and concluding and acting, ſuitable to their characters and circumſtances; and without judgment, as well as taſte and invention, a poet can never hope to ſucceed in ſo delicate an undertaking. Not to mention, that the ſame excellence of faculties which contributes to the improvement of reaſon, the ſame clearneſs of conception, the ſame exactneſs of diſtinction, the ſame vivacity of apprehenſion, are eſſential to the operations

rations of true taſte, and are its infallible concomitants. It ſeldom, or never happens, that a man of ſenſe, who has experience in any art, cannot judge of its beauty; and it is no leſs rare to meet with a man, who has a juſt taſte, without a ſound underſtanding.

Thus, tho' the principles of taſte be univerſal, and nearly, if not entirely the ſame in all men; yet few are qualified to give judgment on any work of art, or eſtabliſh their own ſentiment as the ſtandard of beauty. The organs of internal ſenſation are ſeldom ſo perfect as to allow the general principles their full play, and produce a feeling correſpondent to thoſe principles. They either labour under ſome defect, or are vitiated by ſome diſorder; and by that means, excite a ſentiment, which may be pronounced erroneous. When the critic has no delicacy, he judges without any diſtinction, and is only affected by the groſſer and more palpable qualities of the object: The finer touches paſs unnoticed and diſregarded. Where he is not aided by practice, his verdict is attended with confuſion and heſitation. Where no compariſon has been employed, the moſt frivolous beauties, ſuch as rather merit the name of defects, are the objects of his admiration. Where he lies under the influence of prejudice, all his natural ſentiments are perverted. Where good ſenſe is wanting, he is not qualified to diſcern the beauties of deſign and reaſoning, which are the higheſt and moſt excellent. Under ſome or other of theſe imperfections, the generality of men labour; and hence a true judge in the finer arts is obſerved, even during the moſt poliſhed ages, to be ſo rare a character: Strong ſenſe united to delicate ſentiment, improved by practice, perfected by compariſon, and cleared of all prejudice, can alone entitle critics to this valuable character; and the joint verdict of ſuch, wherever they are to be found, is the true ſtandard of taſte and beauty.

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But where are ſuch critics to be found? By what marks are they to be known? How diſtinguiſh them from pretenders? Theſe queſtions are embarraſſing; and ſeem to throw us back into the ſame uncertainty, from which, during the courſe of this eſſay, we have endeavoured to extricate ourſelves.

But if we conſider the matter aright, theſe are queſtions of fact, not of ſentiment. Whether any particular perſon be endowed with good ſenſe and a delicate imagination, free from prejudice, may often be the ſubject of diſpute, and be liable to great diſcuſſion and enquiry: But that ſuch a character is valuable and eſtimable will be agreed by all mankind. Where theſe doubts occur, men can do no more than in other diſputable queſtions, which are ſubmitted to the underſtanding: They muſt produce the beſt arguments, which their invention ſuggeſts to them; they muſt acknowledge a true and deciſive ſtandard to exiſt ſomewhere, to wit, real exiſtence and matter of fact; and they muſt have indulgence to ſuch as differ from them in their appeals to this ſtandard. It is ſufficient for our preſent purpoſe, if we have proved, that the taſte of all individuals is not upon an equal footing, and that ſome men in general, however difficult to be particularly pitched upon, will be acknowledged by univerſal ſentiment to have a preference above others.

But in reality the difficulty of finding, even in particulars, the ſtandard of taſte, is not ſo great as it is repreſented. Tho' in ſpeculation, we may readily avow a certain criterion in ſcience and deny it in ſentiment, the matter is found in practice to be much more hard to aſcertain in the former caſe than in the latter. Theories of abſtract philoſophy, ſyſtems of profound theology have prevailed during one age: In a ſucceſſive period, theſe have been univerſally exploded: Their abſurdity has been detected: Other theories and ſyſtems have ſupplied

plied their place, which again gave way to their ſucceſſors: And nothing has been experienced more liable to the revolutions of chance and faſhion than theſe pretended deciſions of ſcience. The caſe is not the ſame with the beauties of eloquence and poetry. Juſt expreſſions of paſſion and nature are ſure, after a little time, to gain public vogue, which they maintain for ever. ARISTOTLE and PLATO, and EPICURUS and DESCARTES, may ſucceſſively yield to each other: But TERENCE and VIRGIL maintain an univerſal, undiſputed empire over the minds of men. The abſtract philoſophy of CICERO has loſt its credit: The vehemence of his oratory is ſtill the object of our admiration.

Tho' men of delicate taſte are rare, they are eaſily to be diſtinguiſhed in ſociety by the ſoundneſs of their underſtanding and the ſuperiority of their faculties above the reſt of mankind. The aſcendant, which they acquire, gives a prevalence to that lively approbation, with which they receive any productions of genius, and renders it generally predominant. Many men, when left to themſelves, have but a faint and dubious perception of beauty, who yet are capable of reliſhing any fine ſtroke, which is pointed out to them. Every convert to the admiration of the real poet or orator is the cauſe of ſome new converſion. And tho' prejudices may prevail for a time, they never unite in celebrating any rival to the true genius, but yield at laſt to the force of nature and juſt ſentiment. And thus tho' a civilized nation may eaſily be miſtaken in the choice of their admired philoſopher, they never have been found long to err, in their affection for a favourite epic or tragic author.

But notwithſtanding all our endeavours to fix a ſtandard of taſte, and reconcile the diſcordant apprehenſions of men, there ſtill remain two ſources of variation, which are not ſufficient indeed to confound all the boun-

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daries of beauty and deformity, but will often ſerve to produce a difference in the degrees of our approbation or blame. The one is the different humours of particular men; the other, the particular manners and opinions of our age and country. The general principles of taſte are uniform in human nature: Where men vary in their judgments, ſome defect or perverſion in the faculties may commonly be remarked; proceeding either from prejudice, from want of practice, or want of delicacy; and there is juſt reaſon for approving one taſte, and condemning another. But where there is ſuch a diverſity in the internal frame or external ſituation as is entirely blameleſs on both ſides, and leaves no room to give one the preference above the other; in that caſe a certain diverſity of judgment is unavoidable, and we ſeek in vain for a ſtandard, by which we can reconcile the contrary ſentiments.

A young man, whoſe paſſions are warm, will be more ſenſibly touched with amorous and tender images, than a man more advanced in years, who takes pleaſure in wiſe and philoſophical reflections concerning the conduct of life and moderation of the paſſions. At twenty, OVID may be the favourite author; HORACE at forty; and perhaps TACITUS at fifty. Vainly would we, in ſuch caſes, endeavour to enter into the ſentiments of others, and diveſt ourſelves of thoſe propenſities, which are natural to us. We chuſe our favourite author as we do our friend, from a conformity of humours and diſpoſitions. Mirth or paſſion, ſentiment or reflection; which ever of theſe moſt predominates in our temper, it gives us a peculiar ſympathy with the writer who reſembles us.

One perſon is more pleaſed with the ſublime; another with the tender; a third with raillery. One has a ſtrong ſenſibility to blemiſhes, and is extremely ſtudious of correctneſs: Another has a more lively feeling of beauties, and

and pardons twenty abſurdities and defects for one elevated or pathetic ſtroke. The ear of this man is entirely turned towards conciſeneſs and energy; that man is delighted with a copious, rich, and harmonious expreſſion. Simplicity is affected by one; ornament by another. Comedy, tragedy, ſatire, odes have each their partizans, who prefer that particular ſpecies of writing to all others. It is plainly an error in a critic, to confine his approbation to one ſpecies or ſtyle of writing, and condemn all the reſt. But it is almoſt impoſſible not to feel a predilection for that which ſuits our particular turn and diſpoſition. Such preferences are innocent and unavoidable, and can never reaſonably be the object of diſpute, becauſe there is no ſtandard, by which they can be decided.

For a like reaſon, we are more pleaſed with pictures of characters, which reſemble ſuch as are found in our own age or country, than with thoſe which deſcribe a different ſet of cuſtoms. 'Tis not without ſome effort, that we reconcile ourſelves to the ſimplicity of antient manners, and behold princeſſes drawing water from a ſpring, and kings and heroes dreſſing their own victuals. We may allow in general, that the repreſentation of ſuch manners is no fault in the author, nor deformity in the piece; but we are not ſo ſenſibly touched with them. For this reaſon, comedy is not transferred eaſily from one age or nation to another. A FRENCHMAN or ENGLISHMAN is not pleaſed with the ANDRIA of TERENCE, or CLITIA of MACHIAVEL, where the fine lady, upon whom all the play turns, never once appears to the ſpectators, but is always kept behind the ſcenes, ſuitable to the reſerved humour of the antient GREEKS and modern ITALIANS. A man of learning and reflection can make allowance for theſe peculiarities of manners; but a common audience can never diveſt themſelves ſo far of their uſual ideas and ſentiments as to reliſh pictures which no way reſemble them.

And here there occurs a reflection, which may, perhaps, be useful in examining the celebrated controversy concerning antient and modern learning; where we often find the one side excusing any seeming absurdity in the antients from the manners of the age, and the other refusing to admit this excuse, or at least, admitting it only as an apology for the author, not for the performance. In my opinion, the proper bounds in this subject have seldom been fixed between the contending parties. Where any innocent peculiarities of manners are represented, such as those abovementioned, they ought certainly to be admitted; and a man who is shocked with them, gives an evident proof of false delicacy and refinement. The poets *monument more durable than brass*, must fall to the ground like common brick or clay, were men to make no allowance for the continual revolutions of manners and customs, and would admit nothing but what was suitable to the prevailing fashion. Must we throw aside the pictures of our ancestors, because of their ruffs and fardingales? But where the ideas of morality and decency alter from one age to another, and where vicious manners are described, without being marked with the proper characters of blame and disapprobation; this must be allowed to disfigure the poem, and to be a real deformity. I cannot, nor is it proper I should, enter into such sentiments; and however I may excuse the poet, on account of the manners of his age, I never can relish the composition. The want of humanity and of decency, so conspicuous in the characters drawn by several of the antient poets, even sometimes by HOMER and the GREEK tragedians, diminishes considerably the merit of their noble performances, and gives modern authors a great advantage over them. We are not interested in the fortunes and sentiments of such rough heroes: We are displeased to find the limits of vice

vice and virtue ſo confounded: And whatever indulgence we may give the writer on account of his prejudices, we cannot prevail on ourſelves to enter into his ſentiments, or bear an affection to characters, which we plainly diſcover to be blameable.

The caſe is not the ſame with moral principles, as with ſpeculative opinions of any kind. Theſe are in continual flux and revolution. The ſon embraces a different ſyſtem from the father. Nay, there ſcarce is any man, who can boaſt of great conſtancy and uniformity in this particular. Whatever ſpeculative errors may be found in the polite writings of any age or country, they detract but little from the value of thoſe compoſitions. There needs but a certain turn of thought or imagination to make us enter into all the opinions, which then prevailed, and reliſh the ſentiments or concluſions derived from them. But a very violent effort is requiſite to change our judgment of manners, and excite ſentiments of approbation or blame, love or hatred, different from thoſe to which the mind from long cuſtom has been familiarized. And where a man is confident of the rectitude of that moral ſtandard, by which he judges, he is juſtly jealous of it, and will not pervert the ſentiments of his heart for a moment, in complaiſance to any writer whatever.

Of all ſpeculative errors, thoſe which regard religion, are the moſt excuſable in compoſitions of genius; nor is it ever permitted to judge of the civility or wiſdom of any people, or even of ſingle perſons, by the groſſneſs or refinement of their theological principles. The ſame good ſenſe, that directs men in the ordinary occurrences of life, is not hearkened to in religious matters, which are ſuppoſed to be placed entirely above the cognizance of human reaſon. Upon this account, all the abſurdities of the pagan ſyſtem of theology muſt be overlooked

by every critic, who would pretend to form a juſt notion of antient poetry; and our poſterity, in their turn, muſt have the ſame indulgence to their forefathers. No religious principles can ever be imputed as a fault to any poet, while they remain merely principles, and take not ſuch ſtrong poſſeſſion of his heart, as to lay him under the imputation of *bigotry* or *ſuperſtition*. Where that happens, they confound the ſentiments of morality, and alter the natural boundaries of vice and virtue. They are therefore eternal blemiſhes, according to the principle abovementioned; nor are the prejudices and falſe opinions of the age ſufficient to juſtify them.

'Tis eſſential to the ROMAN catholic religion to inſpire a violent hatred to every other worſhip, and repreſent all pagans, mahometans, and heretics as the objects of divine wrath and vengeance. Such ſentiments, tho' they are in reality extremely blameable, are conſidered as virtues by the zealots of that communion, and are repreſented in their tragedies and epic poems as a kind of divine heroiſm. This bigotry has diſfigured two very fine tragedies of the FRENCH theatre, POLIEUCTE and ATHALIA; where an intemperate zeal for particular modes of worſhip is ſet off with all the pomp imaginable, and forms the predominant character of the heroes. "What is this," ſays the heroic JOAD to JOSABET, finding her in diſcourſe with MATHAN, the prieſt of BAAL, "Does the daughter of DAVID ſpeak to this "traitor? Are you not afraid, leſt the earth ſhould open "and pour forth flames to devour you both? Or leſt "theſe holy walls ſhould fall and cruſh you together? "What is his purpoſe? Why comes that enemy of God "hither to poiſon the air, which we breathe, with his "horrid preſence?" Such ſentiments are received with great applauſe on the theatre of Paris; but at LONDON the ſpectators would be full as much pleaſed to hear A-

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CHILLES tell AGAMEMNON, that he was a dog in his forehead, and a deer in his heart, or JUPITER threaten JUNO with a ſound drubbing, if ſhe will not be quiet.

RELIGIOUS principles are alſo a blemiſh in any polite compoſition, when they riſe up to ſuperſtition, and intrude themſelves into every ſentiment, however remote from any connection with religion. 'Tis no excuſe for the poet, that the cuſtoms of his country had burthened life with ſo many religious ceremonies and obſervances, that no part of it was exempt from that yoak. It muſt be for ever ridiculous in PETRARCH to compare his miſtreſs, LAURA, to JESUS CHRIST. Nor is it leſs ridiculous in that agreeable libertine, BOCCACE, very ſeriouſly to give thanks to GOD ALMIGHTY, and the ladies, for their aſſiſtance in defending him againſt his enemies.

ESSAYS,

MORAL, POLITICAL,

AND

LITERARY.

PART II.*

* Published in 1752.

ESSAY I.

Of COMMERCE.

THE greateſt part of mankind may be divided into two claſſes; that of *ſhallow* thinkers, who fall ſhort of the truth; and that of *abſtruſe* thinkers, who go beyond it. The latter claſs are by far the moſt uncommon; and I may add, by far the moſt uſeful and valuable. They ſuggeſt hints, at leaſt, and ſtart difficulties, which they want, perhaps, ſkill to purſue; but which may produce very fine diſcoveries, when handled by men who have a more juſt way of thinking. At worſt, what they ſay is uncommon; and if it ſhould coſt ſome pains to comprehend it, one has, however, the pleaſure of hearing ſomething that is new. An author is little to be valued, who tells us nothing but what we can learn from every coffee-houſe converſation.

All people of *ſhallow* thought are apt to decry even thoſe of *ſolid* underſtanding, as *abſtruſe* thinkers, and metaphyſicians, and refiners; and never will allow any thing to be juſt which is beyond their own weak conceptions. There are ſome caſes, I own, where an extraordinary refinement affords a ſtrong preſumption of falſehood, and where no reaſoning is to be truſted but what is natural and eaſy. When a man deliberates concerning his conduct in any *particular* affair, and forms ſchemes in politics, trade, oeconomy, or any buſineſs in life, he never ought to draw his arguments too fine, or conneſt too long

long a chain of consequences together. Something is sure to happen, that will disconcert his reasoning, and produce an event different from what he expected. But when we reason upon *general* subjects, one may justly affirm, that out speculations can scarce ever be too fine, provided they be just; and that the difference between a common man and a man of genius is chiefly seen in the shallowness or depth of the principles upon which they proceed. General reasonings seem intricate, merely because they are general; nor is it easy for the bulk of mankind to distinguish, in a great number of particulars, that common circumstance in which they all agree, or to extract it, pure and unmixed, from the other superfluous circumstances. Every judgment or conclusion, with them, is particular. They cannot enlarge their view to those universal propositions, which comprehend under them an infinite number of individuals, and include a whole science in a single theorem. Their eye is confounded with such an extensive prospect; and the conclusions derived from it, even tho' clearly expressed, seem intricate and obscure. But however intricate they may seem, 'tis certain, that general principles, if just and sound, must always prevail in the general course of things, tho' they may fail in particular cases; and 'tis the chief business of philosophers to regard the general course of things. I may add, that 'tis also the chief business of politicians; especially in the domestic government of the state, where the public good, which is, or ought to be their object, depends on the concurrence of a multitude of cases; not, as in foreign politics, on accidents and chances, and the caprices of a few persons. This therefore makes the difference between *particular* deliberations and *general* reasonings, and renders subtilty and refinement much more suitable to the latter than to the former.

I thought this introduction necessary before the following discourses on *commerce*, *money*, *interest*, *balance of trade*,

trade, &c. where, perhaps, there will occur ſome principles which are uncommon, and which may ſeem too refined and ſubtile for ſuch vulgar ſubjects. If falſe, let them be rejected: But no one ought to entertain a prejudice againſt them, merely becauſe they are out of the common road.

The greatneſs of a ſtate, and the happineſs of its ſubjects, however independent they may be ſuppoſed in ſome reſpects, are commonly allowed to be inſeparable with regard to commerce; and as private men receive greater ſecurity, in the poſſeſſion of their trade and riches, from the power of the public, ſo the public becomes powerful in proportion to the riches and extenſive commerce of private men. This maxim is true in general; tho' I cannot forbear thinking, that it may poſſibly admit of ſome exceptions, and that we often eſtabliſh it with too little reſerve and limitation. There may be ſome circumſtances, where the commerce, and riches, and luxury of individuals, inſtead of adding ſtrength to the public, will ſerve only to thin its armies, and diminiſh its authority among the neighbouring nations. Man is a very variable being, and ſuſceptible of many different opinions, principles, and rules of conduct. What may be true while he adheres to one way of thinking, will be found falſe when he has embraced an oppoſite ſet of manners and opinions.

The bulk of every ſtate may be divided into *huſbandmen* and *manufacturers*. The former are employed in the culture of the land: The latter work up the materials furniſhed by the former, into all the commodities which are neceſſary or ornamental to human life. As ſoon as men quit their ſavage ſtate, where they live chiefly by hunting and fiſhing, they muſt fall into theſe two claſſes; tho' the arts of agriculture employ *at firſt* the moſt numerous

merous part of the society *. Time and experience improve so much these arts, that the land may easily maintain a much greater number of men, than those who are immediately employed in its cultivation, or who furnish the more necessary manufactures to such as are so employed.

If these superfluous hands apply themselves to the finer arts, which are commonly denominated the arts of *luxury*, they add to the happiness of the state; since they afford to many the opportunity of receiving enjoyments, with which they would otherwise have been unacquainted. But may not another scheme be proposed for the employment of these superfluous hands? May not the sovereign lay claim to them, and employ them in fleets and armies, to increase the dominions of the state abroad, and spread its fame over distant nations? 'Tis certain, that the fewer desires and wants are found in the proprietors and labourers of land, the fewer hands do they employ; and consequently the superfluities of the land, instead of maintaining tradesmen and manufacturers, may support fleets and armies to a much greater extent, than where a great many arts are required to minister to the luxury of particular persons. Here therefore seems to be a kind of opposition between the greatness of the state and the happiness of the subjects. A state is never greater than when all its superfluous hands are employed in the service of the public. The ease and convenience of private persons require, that these hands should be employed in their service. The

* Monsr. Melon in his political essay on commerce affirms, that even at present, if you divide France into 20 parts, 16 are labourers or peasants; 2 only artizans; one belonging to the law, church, and military; and one merchants, financiers, and bourgeois. This calculation is certainly very erroneous. In France, England, and indeed most parts of Europe, half of the inhabitants live in cities; and even of those who live in the country, a very great number are artisans, perhaps above a third.

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one can never be ſatisfied, but at the expence of the other. As the ambition of the ſovereign muſt entrench on the luxury of individuals; ſo the luxury of individuals muſt diminiſh the force, and check the ambition of the ſovereign.

Nor is this reaſoning merely chimerical; but is founded on hiſtory and experience. The republic of Sparta was certainly more powerful than any ſtate now in the world, conſiſting of an equal number of people: and this was owing entirely to the want of commerce and luxury. The Helotes were the labourers: The Spartans were the ſoldiers or gentlemen. 'Tis evident, that the labour of the Helotes could not have maintained ſo great a number of Spartans, had theſe latter lived in eaſe and delicacy, and given employment to a great variety of trades and manufactures. The like policy may be remarked in Rome. And indeed, thro' all antient hiſtory, 'tis obſervable, that the ſmalleſt republics raiſed and maintained greater armies, than ſtates conſiſting of triple the number of inhabitants, are able to ſupport at preſent. 'Tis computed, that, in all European nations, the proportion between ſoldiers and people does not exceed one to a hundred. But we read, that the city of Rome alone, with its ſmall territory, raiſed and maintained, in early times, ten legions againſt the Latins, Athens, whoſe whole dominions were not larger than Yorkshire, ſent to the expedition againſt Sicily near forty thouſand men *. Dionysius the elder, 'tis ſaid, maintained a ſtanding army of a hundred thouſand foot and ten thouſand horſe, beſide a large fleet of four hundred ſail †; tho' his territories extended no

* Thucydides, lib. 7.

† Diod. Sic. lib. 2. This account, I own, is ſomewhat ſuſpicious, not to ſay worſe; chiefly becauſe this army was not compoſed of citizens, but of mercenary forces.

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farther than the city of SYRACUSE, about a third part of the iſland of SICILY, and ſome ſea-port towns or garriſons on the coaſt of ITALY and ILLYRICUM. 'Tis true, the ancient armies, in time of war, ſubſiſted much upon plunder: But did not the enemy plunder in their turn? which was a more ruinous way of levying a tax, than any other that could be deviſed. In ſhort, no probable reaſon can be aſſigned for the great power of the more antient ſtates above the modern, but their want of commerce and luxury. Few artiſans were maintained by the labour of the farmers, and therefore more ſoldiers might live upon it. TITUS LIVIUS ſays, that ROME, in his time, would find it difficult to raiſe as large an army as that which, in her early days, ſhe ſent out againſt the GAULS and LATINS*. Inſtead of thoſe ſoldiers who fought for liberty and empire in CAMILLUS's time, there were in AUGUSTUS's days, muſicians, painters, cooks, players, and tailors; and if the land was equally cultivated at both periods, 'tis evident it could maintain equal numbers in the one profeſſion as in the other. They added nothing to the mere neceſſaries of life, in the latter period more than in the former.

'Tis natural on this occaſion to aſk, whether ſovereigns may not return to the maxims of antient policy, and conſult their own intereſt in this reſpect, more than the happineſs of their ſubjects? I anſwer, that it appears to me almoſt impoſſible; and that becauſe antient policy was violent, and contrary to the more natural and uſual courſe of things. 'Tis well known with what peculiar laws SPARTA was governed, and what a prodigy that republic is juſtly eſteemed by every one, who has conſidered human nature, as it has diſplayed itſelf on other nations, and other ages. Were the teſtimony of hiſtory leſs poſi-

* TITI LIVII, lib. 7. cap. 24. "Adeo in quæ laboramus," ſays he, "ſola crevimus, divitias luxuriemque."

tive

tive and circumſtantial, ſuch a government would appear a mere philoſophical whim or fiction, and impoſſible ever to be reduced to practice. And tho' the ROMAN and other antient republics were ſupported on principles ſomewhat more natural, yet was there a very extraordinary concurrence of circumſtances to make them ſubmit to ſuch grievous burthens. They were free ſtates; they were ſmall ones; and the age being martial, all the neighbouring ſtates were continually in arms. Freedom naturally begets public ſpirit, eſpecially in ſmall ſtates; and this public ſpirit, this *amor patriæ*, muſt increaſe, when the public is almoſt in continual alarm, and men are obliged, every moment, to expoſe themſelves to the greateſt dangers for its defence. A continual ſucceſſion of wars makes every citizen a ſoldier: He takes the field in his turn: and during his ſervice is chiefly maintained by himſelf. And notwithſtanding that his ſervice is equivalent to a very ſevere tax, 'tis leſs felt by a people addicted to arms, who fight for honour and revenge more than pay, and are unacquainted with gain and induſtry as well as pleaſure*. Not to mention the great equality of fortunes amongſt the inhabitants of the antient republics, where every field belonging to a different proprietor,

* The more antient ROMANS lived in perpetual war with all their neighbours: and in old LATIN, the term, *hoſtis*, expreſſed both a ſtranger and an enemy. This is remarked by CICERO; but by him is aſcribed to the humanity of his anceſtors, who ſoftened, as much as poſſible, the denomination of an enemy, by calling him by the ſame appellation which ſignified a ſtranger. *De Off.* lib. 2. 'Tis however much more probable, from the manners of the times, that the ferocity of thoſe people was ſo great as to make them regard all ſtrangers as enemies, and call them by the ſame name. It is not, beſides, conſiſtent with the moſt common maxims of policy or of nature, that any ſtate ſhould regard its public enemies with a friendly eye, or preſerve any ſuch ſentiments for them as the ROMAN orator would aſcribe to his anceſtors. Not to mention, that the early ROMANS really exerciſed piracy, as we learn from their firſt treaties with CARTHAGE, preſerved by POLYBIUS, lib. 3. and conſequently like the SALLEE and ALGERINE rovers, were actually at war with moſt nations, and a ſtranger and an enemy were with them almoſt ſynonimous.

was able to maintain a family, and rendered the numbers of citizens very considerable, even without trade and manufactures.

But tho' the want of trade and manufactures, amongst a free and very martial people, may *sometimes* have no other effect than to render the public more powerful, 'tis certain, that in the common course of human affairs, it will have a quite contrary tendency. Sovereigns must take mankind as they find them, and cannot pretend to introduce any violent change in their principles and ways of thinking. A long course of time, with a variety of accidents and circumstances, are requisite to produce those great revolutions, which so much diversify the face of human affairs. And the less natural any set of principles are, which support a particular society, the more difficulty will a legislator meet with in raising and cultivating them. 'Tis his best policy to comply with the common bent of mankind, and give it all the improvements of which it is susceptible. Now, according to the most natural course of things, industry, and arts, and trade increase the power of the sovereign as well as the happiness of the subjects; and that policy is violent, which aggrandizes the public by the poverty of individuals. This will easily appear from a few considerations, which will present to us the consequences of sloth and barbarity.

Where manufactures and mechanic arts are not cultivated, the bulk of the people must apply themselves to agriculture; and if their skill and industry increase, there must arise a great superfluity from their labour beyond what suffices to maintain them. They have no temptation, therefore, to increase their skill and industry; since they cannot exchange that superfluity for any commodities, which may serve either to their pleasure or vanity. A habit of indolence naturally prevails. The greater

part

part of the land lies uncultivated. What is cultivated, yields not its utmoſt, for want of ſkill or aſſiduity in the farmers. If at any time the public exigencies require, that great numbers ſhould be employed in the public ſervice, the labour of the people furniſhes now no ſuperfluities, by which theſe numbers can be maintained. The labourers cannot increaſe their ſkill and induſtry on a ſudden. Lands uncultivated cannot be brought into tillage for ſome years. The armies, mean while, muſt either make ſudden and violent conqueſts, or diſband for want of ſubſiſtence. A regular attack or defence, therefore, is not to be expected from ſuch a people, and their ſoldiers muſt be as ignorant and unſkilful as their farmers and manufacturers.

Every thing in the world is purchaſed by labour; and our paſſions are the only cauſes of labour. When a nation abounds in manufactures and mechanic arts, the proprietors of land, as well as the farmers, ſtudy agriculture as a ſcience, and redouble their induſtry and attention. The ſuperfluity which ariſes from their labour, is not loſt; but is exchanged with the manufacturers for thoſe commodities which mens luxury now makes them covet. By this means, land furniſhes a great deal more of the neceſſaries of life, than what ſuffices for thoſe who cultivate it. In times of peace and tranquility, this ſuperfluity goes to the maintenance of manufacturers, and the improvers of liberal arts. But 'tis eaſy for the public to convert many of theſe manufacturers into ſoldiers, and maintain them by that ſuperfluity, which ariſes from the labour of the farmers. Accordingly we find, that this is the caſe in all civilized governments. When the ſovereign raiſes an army, what is the conſequence? He impoſes a tax. This tax obliges all the people to retrench what is leaſt neceſſary to their ſubſiſtence. Thoſe who labour in ſuch commodities, muſt either enliſt in the troops, or turn themſelves to agriculture, and thereby oblige ſome

labourers to enlist for want of business. And to consider the matter abstractly, manufactures increase the power of the state only as they store up so much labour, and that of a kind to which the public may lay claim, without depriving any one of the necessaries of life. The more labour, therefore, is employed beyond mere necessaries, the more powerful is any state; since the persons engaged in that labour may easily be converted to the public service. In a state without manufactures, there may be the same number of hands; but there is not the same quantity of labour, nor of the same kind. All the labour is there bestowed upon necessaries, which can admit of little or no abatement.

Thus the greatness of the sovereign and the happiness of the state are, in a great measure, united with regard to trade and manufactures. 'Tis a violent method, and in most cases impracticable, to oblige the labourer to toil, in order to raise from the land more than what subsists himself and family. Furnish him with manufactures and commodities, and he will do it of himself. Afterwards you will find it easy to seize some part of his superfluous labour, and employ it in the public service, without giving him his wonted return. Being accustomed to industry, he will think this less grievous, than if, at once, you obliged him to an augmentation of labour without any reward. The case is the same with regard to the other members of the state. The greater is the stock of labour of all kinds, the greater quantity may be taken from the heap, without making any sensible alteration upon it.

A public granary of corn, a storehouse of cloth, a magazine of arms; all these must be allowed real riches and strength in any state. Trade and industry are really nothing but a stock of labour, which, in time of peace and tranquility, is employed for the ease and satisfaction of individuals; but in the exigencies of state, may, in part, be turned

turned to public advantage. Could we convert a city into a kind of fortified camp, and infuse into each breaſt ſo martial a genius, and ſuch a paſſion for public good, as to make every one willing to undergo the greateſt hardſhips for the ſake of the public; theſe affections might now, as in antient times, prove alone a ſufficient ſpur to induſtry, and ſupport the community. It would then be advantageous, as in camps, to baniſh all arts and luxury; and, by reſtriction on equipage and tables, make the proviſions and forage laſt longer than if the army were loaded with a number of ſuperfluous retainers. But as theſe principles are too diſintereſted and too difficult to ſupport, 'tis requiſite to govern men by other paſſions, and animate them with a ſpirit of avarice and induſtry, art and luxury. The camp is, in this caſe, loaded with a ſuperfluous retinue; but the proviſions flow in proportionably larger. The harmony of the whole is ſtill ſupported; and the natural bent of the mind being more complied with, individuals, as well as the public, find their account in the obſervance of thoſe maxims.

The ſame method of reaſoning will let us ſee the advantage of *foreign* commerce, in augmenting the power of the ſtate, as well as the riches and happineſs of the ſubjects. It increaſes the ſtock of labour in the nation; and the ſovereign may convert what ſhare of it he finds neceſſary to the ſervice of the public. Foreign trade, by its imports, furniſhes materials for new manufactures; and by its exports, it produces labour in particular commodities, which could not be conſumed at home. In ſhort, a kingdom, that has a large import and export, muſt abound more with induſtry, and that employed upon delicacies and luxuries, than a kingdom which reſts contented with its native commodities. It is, therefore, more powerful, as well as richer and happier. The individuals reap the benefit of theſe commodities, ſo far as they gratify the ſenſes and appetites. And the public is alſo

a gainer, while a greater ſtock of labour is, by this means, ſtored up againſt any public exigency; that is, a greater number of laborious men are maintained, who may be diverted to the public ſervice, without robbing any one of the neceſſaries, or even the chief conveniencies of life.

If we conſult hiſtory, we ſhall find, that in moſt nations foreign trade has preceded any refinement in home manufactures, and given birth to domeſtic luxury. The temptation is ſtronger to make uſe of foreign commodities, which are ready for uſe, and which are entirely new to us, than to make improvements on any domeſtic commodity, which always advance by ſlow degrees, and never affect us by their novelty. The profit is alſo very great, in exporting what is ſuperfluous at home, and what bears no price, to foreign nations, whoſe ſoil or climate is not favourable to that commodity. Thus men become acquainted with the *pleaſures* of luxury and the *profits* of commerce; and their *delicacy* and *induſtry*, being once awakened, carry them to farther improvements, in every branch of domeſtic as well as foreign trade. And this perhaps is the chief advantage which ariſes from a commerce with ſtrangers. It rouſes men from their indolence; and preſenting the gayer and more opulent part of the nation with objects of luxury, which they never before dreamed of, raiſes in them a deſire of a more ſplendid way of life than what their anceſtors enjoyed. And at the ſame time, the few merchants, who poſſeſs the ſecret of this importation and exportation, make exorbitant profits; and becoming rivals in wealth to the antient nobility, tempt other adventurers to become their rivals in commerce. Imitation ſoon diffuſes all thoſe arts; while domeſtic manufacturers emulate the foreign in their improvements, and work up every home commodity to the utmoſt perfection of which it is ſuſceptible. Their own ſteel and iron, in ſuch laborious hands, become equal to the gold and rubies of the INDIES.

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When the affairs of the ſociety are once brought to this ſituation, a nation may loſe moſt of its foreign trade, and yet continue a great and powerful people. If ſtrangers will not take any particular commodity of ours, we muſt ceaſe to labour in it. The ſame hands will turn themſelves towards ſome refinement in other commodities, which may be wanted at home. And there muſt always be materials for them to work upon; till every perſon in the ſtate, who poſſeſſes riches, enjoys as great plenty of home commodities, and thoſe in as great perfection, as he deſires; which can never poſſibly happen. CHINA is repreſented as one of the moſt flouriſhing empires in the world; tho' it has very little commerce beyond its own territories.

It will not, I hope, be conſidered as a ſuperfluous digreſſion, if I here obſerve, that as the multitude of mechanical arts is advantageous, ſo is the great number of perſons to whoſe ſhare the productions of theſe arts fall. A too great diſproportion among the citizens weakens any ſtate. Every perſon, if poſſible, ought to enjoy the fruits of his labour, in a full poſſeſſion of all the neceſſaries, and many of the conveniencies of life. No one can doubt, but ſuch an equality is moſt ſuitable to human nature, and diminiſhes much leſs from the *happineſs* of the rich than it adds to that of the poor. It alſo augments the *power of the ſtate*, and makes any extraordinary taxes or impoſitions be paid with much more chearfulneſs. Where the riches are engroſſed by a few, theſe muſt contribute very largely to the ſupplying the public neceſſities. But when the riches are diſperſed among multitudes, the burthen feels light on every ſhoulder, and the taxes make not a very ſenſible difference on any one's way of living.

Add to this, that where the riches are in few hands, theſe muſt enjoy all the power, and will readily conſpire to

lay the whole burthen on the poor, and oppreſs them ſtill farther, to the diſcouragement of all induſtry.

In this circumſtance conſiſts the great advantage of ENGLAND above any nation at preſent in the world, or that appears in the records of any ſtory. 'Tis true, the ENGLISH feel ſome diſadvantages in foreign trade by the high price of labour, which is in part the effect of the riches of their artiſans, as well as of the plenty of money: But as foreign trade is not the moſt material circumſtance, 'tis not to be put in competition with the happineſs of ſo many millions. And if there were no more to endear to them that free government under which they live, this alone were ſufficient. The poverty of the common people is a natural, if not an infallible effect of abſolute monarchy; tho' I doubt, whether it be always true, on the other hand, that their riches are an infallible reſult of liberty. Liberty muſt be attended with particular accidents, and a certain turn of thinking, in order to produce that effect. Lord BACON, accounting for the great advantages obtained by the ENGLISH in their wars with FRANCE, aſcribes them chiefly to the ſuperior eaſe and plenty of the common people amongſt the former; yet the government of the two kingdoms were, at that time, pretty much alike. Where the labourers and artizans are accuſtomed to work for low wages, and to retain but a ſmall part of the fruits of their labour, 'tis difficult for them, even in a free government, to better their condition, or conſpire among themſelves to heighten their wages. But even where they are accuſtomed to a more plentiful way of life, 'tis eaſy for the rich, in a deſpotic government, to conſpire againſt *them*, and throw the whole burthen of the taxes on their ſhoulders.

It may ſeem an odd poſition, that the poverty of the common people in FRANCE, ITALY, and SPAIN, is, in

ſome meaſure, owing to the ſuperior riches of the ſoil and happineſs of the climate; and yet there want not many reaſons to juſtify this paradox. In ſuch a fine mold or ſoil as that of thoſe more ſouthern regions, agriculture is an eaſy art; and one man, with a couple of ſorry horſes, will be able, in a ſeaſon, to cultivate as much land as will pay a pretty conſiderable rent to the proprietor. All the art, which the farmer knows, is to leave his ground fallow for a year, ſo ſoon as it is exhauſted; and the warmth of the ſun alone and temperature of the climate enrich it, and reſtore its fertility. Such poor peaſants, therefore, require only a ſimple maintenance for their labour. They have no ſtock nor riches, which claim more; and at the ſame time, they are for ever dependant on their landlord, who gives no leaſes, nor fears that his land will be ſpoiled by the ill methods of cultivation. In ENGLAND, the land is rich, but coarſe; muſt be cultivated at a great expence; and produces ſlender crops, when not carefully managed, and by a method which gives not the full profit but in a courſe of ſeveral years. A farmer, therefore, in ENGLAND muſt have a conſiderable ſtock and a long leaſe; which beget proportional profits. The fine vineyards of CHAMPAGNE and BURGUNDY, that oft yield to the landlord above five pounds *per* acre, are cultivated by peaſants, who have ſcarce bread: And the reaſon is, that ſuch peaſants need no ſtock but their own limbs, with inſtruments of huſbandry, which they can buy for twenty ſhillings. The farmers are commonly in ſome better circumſtances in thoſe countries. But the graſiers are moſt at their eaſe of all thoſe who cultivate the land. The reaſon is ſtill the ſame. Men muſt have profits proportionable to their expence and hazard. Where ſo conſiderable a number of the labouring poor as the peaſants and farmers are in very low circumſtances, all the reſt muſt partake of their poverty, whether the government of that nation be monarchical or republican.

We may form a ſimilar remark with regard to the general hiſtory of mankind. What is the reaſon, why no people living between the tropics could ever yet attain to any art or civility, or reach even any police in their government, and any military diſcipline; while few nations in the temperate climates have been altogether deprived of theſe advantages? 'Tis probable, that one cauſe of this phænomenon is the warmth and equality of weather in the torrid zone, which render cloaths and houſes leſs requiſite for the inhabitants, and thereby remove, in part, that neceſſity, which is the great ſpur to induſtry and invention. *Curis acuens mortalia corda.* Not to mention, that the fewer goods or poſſeſſions of this kind any people enjoy, the fewer quarrels are likely to ariſe amongſt them, and the leſs neceſſity will there be for a ſettled police or regular authority to protect and defend them from foreign enemies, or from each other.

ESSAY II.

Of Refinement in the Arts.

LUXURY is a word of a very uncertain ſignification, and may be taken in a good as well as in a bad ſenſe. In general, it means great refinement in the gratification of the ſenſes; and any degree of it may be innocent or blameable, according to the age, or country, or condition of the perſon. The bounds between the virtue and the vice cannot here be fixed exactly, more than in other moral ſubjects. To imagine, that the gratifying any of the ſenſes, or the indulging any delicacy in meats, drinks, or apparel, is of itſelf a vice, can never enter into a head, that is not diſordered by the frenzies of enthuſiaſm. I have, indeed, heard of a monk abroad, who, becauſe the windows of his cell opened upon a very noble proſpect, made a *covenant with his eyes* never to turn that way, or receive ſo ſenſual a gratification. And ſuch is the crime of drinking Champagne or Burgundy, preferably to ſmall beer or porter. Theſe indulgences are only vices, when they are purſued at the expence of ſome virtue, as liberality or charity; in like manner as they are follies, when for them a man ruins his fortune, and reduces himſelf to want and beggary. Where they entrench upon no virtue, but leave ample ſubject whence to provide for friends, family, and every proper object of generoſity or compaſſion, they are intirely innocent, and have in every age been acknowledged ſuch by almoſt all moraliſts. To

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be intirely occupied with the luxury of the table, for inſtance, without any reliſh for the pleaſures of ambition, ſtudy, or converſation, is a mark of groſs ſtupidity, and is incompatible with any vigour of temper or genius. To confine one's expence intirely to ſuch a gratification, without regard to friends or family, is an indication of a heart intirely devoid of humanity or benevolence. But if a man reſerve time ſufficient for all laudable purſuits, and money ſufficient for all generous purpoſes, he is free from every ſhadow of blame or reproach.

Since luxury may be conſidered either as innocent or blameable, one may be ſurprized at theſe prepoſterous opinions which have been entertained concerning it; while men of libertine principles beſtow praiſes even on vicious luxury, and repreſent it as highly advantageous to ſociety; and on the other hand, men of ſevere morals blame even the moſt innocent luxury, and repreſent it as the ſource of all the corruptions, diſorders, and factions, incident to civil government. We ſhall here endeavour to correct both theſe extremes, by proving, *firſt*, that the ages of refinement are both the happieſt and moſt virtuous; *ſecondly*, that where-ever luxury ceaſes to be innocent, it alſo ceaſes to be beneficial; and when carried a degree too far, is a quality pernicious, tho' perhaps not the moſt pernicious, to political ſociety.

To prove the firſt point, we need but conſider the effects of refinement both on *private* and on *public* life. Human happineſs, according to the moſt received notions, ſeems to conſiſt in three ingredients; action, pleaſure, and indolence: And tho' theſe ingredients ought to be mixed in different proportions, according to the particular diſpoſitions of the perſon; yet no one ingredient can be intirely wanting, without deſtroying, in ſome meaſure, the reliſh of the whole compoſition. Indolence or repoſe, indeed, ſeems not of itſelf to contribute much to our enjoyment;

joyment; but, like ſleep, is requiſite as an indulgence to the weakneſs of human nature, which cannot ſupport an uninterrupted courſe of buſineſs or pleaſure. That quick march of the ſpirits, which takes a man from himſelf, and chiefly gives ſatisfaction, does in the end exhauſt the mind, and requires ſome intervals of repoſe, which, tho' agreeable for a moment, yet, if prolonged, beget a languor and lethargy, that deſtroy all enjoyment. Education, cuſtom, and example, have a mighty influence in turning the mind to any of theſe purſuits; and it muſt be owned, that where they promote a reliſh for action and pleaſure, they are ſo far favourable to human happineſs. In times when induſtry and arts flouriſh, men are kept in perpetual occupation, and enjoy, as their reward, the occupation itſelf, as well as thoſe pleaſures which are the fruits of their labour. The mind acquires new vigour; enlarges its powers and faculties; and by an aſſiduity in honeſt induſtry, both ſatisfies its natural appetites, and prevents the growth of unnatural ones, which commonly ſpring up, when nouriſhed with eaſe and idleneſs. Baniſh thoſe arts from ſociety, you deprive men both of action and of pleaſure; and leaving nothing but indolence in their place, you even deſtroy the reliſh of indolence, which never is agreeable, but when it ſucceeds to labour, and recruits the ſpirits, exhauſted by too much application and fatigue.

Another advantage of induſtry and of refinements in the mechanical arts, is, that they commonly produce ſome refinements in the liberal; nor can the one be carried to perfection, without being accompanied, in ſome degree, with the other. The ſame age which produces great philoſophers and politicians, renowned generals and poets, uſually abounds with ſkilful weavers and ſhip-carpenters. We cannot reaſonably expect, that a piece of woollen cloth will be wrought to perfection in a nation which is ignorant of aſtronomy, or where ethics are neglected. The

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ſpirit of the age affects all the arts; and the minds of men, being once rouſed from their lethargy, and put into a fermentation, turn themſelves on all ſides, and carry improvements into every art and ſcience. Profound ignorance is totally baniſhed, and men enjoy the privilege of rational creatures, to think as well as to act, to cultivate the pleaſures of the mind as well as thoſe of the body.

The more theſe refined arts advance, the more ſociable do men become; nor is it poſſible, that, when inriched with ſcience, and poſſeſſed of a fund of converſation, they ſhould be contented to remain in ſolitude, or live with their fellow-citizens in that diſtant manner, which is peculiar to ignorant and barbarous nations. They flock into cities; love to receive and communicate knowledge; to ſhow their wit or their breeding; their taſte in converſation or living, in cloaths or furniture. Curioſity allures the wiſe; vanity the fooliſh; and pleaſure both. Particular clubs and ſocieties are every where formed: Both ſexes meet in an eaſy and ſociable manner; and the tempers of men, as well as their behaviour, refine apace. So that, beſide the improvements which they receive from knowledge and the liberal arts, 'tis impoſſible but they muſt feel an increaſe of humanity, from the very habit of converſing together, and contributing to each other's pleaſure and entertainment. Thus *induſtry*, *knowledge*, and *humanity*, are linked together by an indiſſoluble chain, and are found, from experience as well as reaſon, to be peculiar to the more poliſhed, and, what are commonly denominated, the more luxurious ages.

Nor are theſe advantages attended with diſadvantages which bear any proportion to them. The more men refine upon pleaſure, the leſs will they indulge in exceſſes of any kind; becauſe nothing is more deſtructive to true pleaſure than ſuch exceſſes. One may ſafely affirm, that the TARTARS are oftener guilty of beaſtly gluttony, when they

they feaſt on their dead horſes, than EUROPEAN courtiers with all their refinements of cookery. And if libertine love, or even infidelity to the marriage-bed, be more frequent in polite ages, when it is often regarded only as a piece of gallantry; drunkenneſs, on the other hand, is much leſs common: A vice more odious, and more pernicious both to mind and body. And in this matter I would appeal, not only to an OVID or a PETRONIUS, but to a SENECA or a CATO. We know, that CÆSAR, during CATALINE's conſpiracy, being neceſſitated to put into CATO's hands a *billet-doux*, which diſcovered an intrigue with SERVILIA, CATO's own ſiſter, that ſtern philoſopher threw it back to him with indignation; and, in the bitterneſs of his wrath, gave him the appellation of drunkard, as a term more opprobrious than that with which he could more juſtly have reproached him.

But induſtry, knowledge, and humanity, are not advantageous in private life alone: They diffuſe their beneficial influence on the *public*, and render the government as great and flouriſhing as they make individuals happy and proſperous. The increaſe and conſumption of all the commodities which ſerve to the ornament and pleaſure of life, are advantageous to ſociety; becauſe at the ſame time that they multiply thoſe innocent gratifications to individuals, they are a kind of *ſtorehouſe* of labour, which, in the exigencies of ſtate, may be turned to the public ſervice. In a nation, where there is no demand for ſuch ſuperfluities, men ſink into indolence, loſe all the enjoyment of life, and are uſeleſs to the public, which cannot maintain nor ſupport its fleets and armies, from the induſtry of ſuch ſlothful members.

The bounds of all the EUROPEAN kingdoms are, at preſent, pretty near the ſame they were two hundred years ago: But what a difference is there in the power and grandeur of thoſe kingdoms? Which can be aſcribed to nothing

nothing but the increaſe of art and induſtry. When CHARLES VIII. of FRANCE invaded ITALY, he carried with him about 20,000 men: And yet this armament ſo exhauſted the nation, as we learn from GUICCIARDIN, that for ſome years it was not able to make ſo great an effort. The late king of FRANCE, in time of war, kept in pay above 400,000 men †; tho' from MAZARINE's death to his own, he was engaged in a courſe of wars that laſted near thirty years.

This induſtry is much promoted by the knowledge inſeparable from the ages of art and refinement; as, on the other hand, this knowledge enables the public to make the beſt advantage of the induſtry of its ſubjects. Laws, order, police, diſcipline; theſe can never be carried to any degree of perfection, before human reaſon has refined itſelf by exerciſe, and by an application to the more vulgar arts, at leaſt, of commerce and manufactures. Can we expect, that a government will be well modelled by a people, who know not how to make a ſpinning-wheel, or to employ a loom to advantage? Not to mention, that all ignorant ages are infeſted with ſuperſtition, which throws the government off its bias, and diſturbs men in the purſuit of their intereſt and happineſs.

Knowledge in the arts of government naturally begets mildneſs and moderation, by inſtructing men in the advantages of humane maxims above rigour and ſeverity, which drive ſubjects into rebellion, and render the return to ſubmiſſion impracticable, by cutting off all hopes of pardon. When the tempers of men are ſoftened as well as their knowledge improved, this humanity appears ſtill more conſpicuous, and is the chief characteriſtic which diſtinguiſhes a civilized age from times of barbarity and ignorance. Factions are then leſs inveterate, revolutions leſs tragical, authority leſs ſevere, and ſeditions leſs frequent.

† The inſcription on the PLACE-DE-VENDOME ſays 440,000.

Even

Even foreign wars abate of their cruelty; and after the field of battle, where honour and intereſt ſteel men againſt compaſſion as well as fear, the combatants diveſt themſelves of the brute, and reſume the man.

Nor need we fear, that men, by loſing their ferocity, will loſe their martial ſpirit, or become leſs undaunted and vigorous in defence of their country or their liberty. The arts have no ſuch effect in enervating either the mind or body. On the contrary, induſtry, their inſeparable attendant, adds new force to both. And if anger, which is ſaid to be the whetſtone of courage, loſes ſomewhat of its aſperity, by politeneſs and refinement; a ſenſe of honour, which is a ſtronger, more conſtant, and more governable principle, acquires freſh vigour by that elevation of genius, which ariſes from knowledge and a good education. Add to this, that courage can neither have any duration, nor be of any uſe, when not accompanied with diſcipline and martial ſkill, which are ſeldom found among a barbarous people. The antients remarked, that DATAMES was the only barbarian that ever knew the art of war. And PYRRHUS ſeeing the ROMANS marſhal their army with ſome art and ſkill, ſaid with ſurprize, *Theſe barbarians have nothing barbarous in their diſcipline!* 'Tis obſervable, that as the old ROMANS, by applying themſelves ſolely to war, were the only uncivilized people that ever poſſeſſed military diſcipline; ſo the modern ITALIANS are the only civilized people, among EUROPEANS, that ever wanted courage and a martial ſpirit. Thoſe who would aſcribe this effeminacy of the ITALIANS to their luxury or politeneſs, or application to the arts, need but conſider the FRENCH and ENGLISH, whoſe bravery is as unconteſtable, as their love for luxury, and their aſſiduity in commerce. The ITALIAN hiſtorians give us a more ſatisfactory reaſon for this degeneracy of their countrymen. They ſhew us how the ſword was dropt at once by all the ITALIAN ſovereigns; while the VENETIAN ariſtocracy was jealous

jealous of its ſubjects, the FLORENTINE democracy applied itſelf intirely to commerce; ROME was governed by prieſts, and NAPLES by women. War then became the buſineſs of ſoldiers of fortune, who ſpared one another, and, to the aſtoniſhment of the world, could engage a whole day in what they called a battle, and return at night to their camp, without the leaſt bloodſhed.

What has chiefly induced ſevere moraliſts to declaim againſt refinement in the arts, is the example of antient ROME, which, joining to its poverty and ruſticity, virtue and public ſpirit, roſe to ſuch a ſurprizing height of grandeur and liberty; but having learned from its conquered provinces the ASIATIC luxury, fell into every kind of corruption; whence aroſe ſedition and civil wars, attended at laſt with the total loſs of liberty. All the LATIN claſſics, whom we peruſe in our infancy, are full of theſe ſentiments, and univerſally aſcribe the ruin of their ſtate to the arts and riches imported from the Eaſt: Inſomuch that SALLUST repreſents a taſte for painting as a vice no leſs than lewdneſs and drinking. And ſo popular were theſe ſentiments, during the latter ages of the republic, that this author abounds in praiſes of the old rigid ROMAN virtue, tho' himſelf the moſt egregious inſtance of modern luxury and corruption; ſpeaks contemptuouſly of the GRECIAN eloquence, tho' the moſt elegant writer in the world; nay, employs prepoſterous digreſſions and declamations to this purpoſe, tho' a model of taſte and correctneſs.

But it would be eaſy to prove, that theſe writers miſtook the cauſe of the diſorders in the ROMAN ſtate, and aſcribed to luxury and the arts, what really proceeded from an ill-modelled government, and the unlimited extent of conqueſts. Refinement on the pleaſures and conveniencies of life has no natural tendency to beget venality and corruption. The value which all men put upon any particular pleaſure,

pleaſure, depends on compariſon and experience; nor is a porter leſs greedy of money, which he ſpends on bacon and brandy, than a courtier, who purchaſes champagne and ortolans. Riches are valuable at all times, and to all men, becauſe they always purchaſe pleaſures, ſuch as men are accuſtomed to, and deſire: Nor can any thing reſtrain or regulate the love of money, but a ſenſe of honour and virtue; which, if it be not nearly equal at all times, will naturally abound moſt in ages of knowledge and refinement.

Of all EUROPEAN kingdoms, POLAND ſeems the moſt defective in the arts of war, as well as peace, mechanical as well as liberal; and yet 'tis there that venality and corruption do moſt prevail. The nobles ſeem to have preſerved their crown elective for no other purpoſe, but regularly to ſell it to the higheſt bidder. This is almoſt the only ſpecies of commerce with which that people are acquainted.

The liberties of ENGLAND, ſo far from decaying ſince the improvements in the arts, have never flouriſhed ſo much as during that period. And tho' corruption may ſeem to increaſe of late years; this is chiefly to be aſcribed to our eſtabliſhed liberty, when our princes have found the impoſſibility of governing without parliaments, or of terrifying parliaments by the phantom of prerogative. Not to mention, that this corruption or venality prevails infinitely more among the electors than the elected; and therefore cannot juſtly be aſcribed to any refinements in luxury.

If we conſider the matter in a proper light, we ſhall find, that improvements in the arts are rather favourable to liberty, and have a natural tendency to preſerve, if not produce a free government. In rude unpoliſhed nations, where the arts are neglected, all the labour is beſtowed on the cultivation of the ground; and the whole ſociety is divided into two claſſes, proprietors of land, and their

vaſſals or tenants. The latter are neceſſarily dependent, and fitted for ſlavery and ſubjection; eſpecially where they poſſeſs no riches, and are not valued for their knowledge in agriculture; as muſt always be the caſe where the arts are neglected. The former naturally erect themſelves into petty tyrants; and muſt either ſubmit to an abſolute maſter for the ſake of peace and order; or if they will preſerve their independency, like the antient barons, they muſt fall into feuds and conteſts among themſelves, and throw the whole ſociety into ſuch confuſion, as is perhaps worſe than the moſt deſpotic government. But where luxury nouriſhes commerce and induſtry, the peaſants, by a proper cultivation of the land, become rich and independent; while the tradeſmen and merchants acquire a ſhare of the property, and draw authority and conſideration to that middling rank of men, who are the beſt and firmeſt baſis of public liberty. Theſe ſubmit not to ſlavery, like the poor peaſants, from poverty and meanneſs of ſpirit; and having no hopes of tyrannizing over others, like the barons, they are not tempted, for the ſake of that gratification, to ſubmit to the tyranny of their ſovereign. They covet equal laws, which may ſecure their property, and preſerve them from monarchical, as well as ariſtocratical tyranny.

The houſe of commons is the ſupport of our popular government; and all the world acknowledge, that it owed its chief influence and conſideration to the increaſe of commerce, which threw ſuch a balance of property into the hands of the commons. How inconſiſtent then is it to blame ſo violently a refinement in the arts, and to repreſent it as the bane of liberty and public ſpirit!

To declaim againſt preſent times, and magnify the virtue of remote anceſtors, is a propenſity almoſt inherent in human nature: And as the ſentiments and opinions of civilized ages alone are tranſmitted to poſterity, hence it is that

that we meet with ſo many ſevere judgments pronounced againſt luxury, and even ſcience; and hence it is that at preſent we give ſo ready an aſſent to them. But the fallacy is eaſily perceived from comparing different nations that are contemporaries; where we both judge more impartially, and can better ſet in oppoſition thoſe manners with which we are ſufficiently acquainted. Treachery and cruelty, the moſt pernicious and moſt odious of all vices, ſeem peculiar to uncivilized ages; and by the refined GREEKS and ROMANS were aſcribed to all the barbarous nations, which ſurrounded them. They might juſtly, therefore, have preſumed, that their own anceſtors, ſo highly celebrated, poſſeſſed no greater virtue, and were as much inferior to their poſterity in honour and humanity, as in taſte and ſcience. An antient FRANK or SAXON may be highly extolled: But I believe every man would think his life or fortune much leſs ſecure in the hands of a MOOR or TARTAR, than in thoſe of a FRENCH or ENGLISH gentleman, the rank of men the moſt civilized in the moſt civilized nations.

WE come now to the *ſecond* poſition which we propoſed to illuſtrate, *viz.* that as innocent luxury, or a refinement in the arts and conveniencies of life, is advantageous to the public; ſo where-ever luxury ceaſes to be innocent, it alſo ceaſes to be beneficial; and when carried a degree farther, begins to be a quality pernicious, tho', perhaps, not the moſt pernicious, to political ſociety.

Let us conſider what we call vicious luxury. No gratification, however ſenſual, can of itſelf be eſteemed vicious. A gratification is only vicious, when it engroſſes all a man's expence, and leaves no ability for ſuch acts of duty and generoſity as are required by his ſituation and fortune. Suppoſe, that he correct the vice, and employ part of his expence in the education of his children, in the ſupport of his friends, and in relieving the poor; would

any prejudice result to society? On the contrary, the same consumption would arise; and that labour, which, at present, is employed only in producing a slender gratification to one man, would relieve the necessitous, and bestow satisfaction on hundreds. The same care and toil which raise a dish of peas at CHRISTMAS, would give bread to a whole family during six months. To say, that, without a vicious luxury, the labour would not have been employed at all, is only to say, that there is some other defect in human nature, such as indolence, selfishness, inattention to others, for which luxury in some measure provides a remedy; as one poison may be an antidote to another. But virtue, like wholsome food, is better than poisons, however corrected.

Suppose the same number of men that are at present in BRITAIN, with the same soil and climate; I ask, is it not possible for them to be happier, by the most perfect way of life which can be imagined, and by the greatest reformation which Omnipotence itself could work in their temper and disposition? To assert, that they cannot, appears evidently ridiculous. As the land is able to maintain more than all its inhabitants, they could never, in such an UTOPIAN state, feel any other ills than those which arise from bodily sickness; and these are not the half of human miseries. All other ills spring from some vice, either in ourselves or others; and even many of our diseases proceed from the same origin. Remove the vices, and the ills follow. You must only take care to remove all the vices. If you remove part, you may render the matter worse. By banishing *vicious* luxury, without curing sloth and an indifference to others, you only diminish industry in the state, and add nothing to mens charity or their generosity. Let us, therefore, rest contented with asserting, that two opposite vices in a state may be more advantageous than either of them alone; but let us never pronounce vice in itself advantageous. Is it not very incon-

ſiſtent for an author to aſſert in one page, that moral diſtinctions are inventions of politicians for public intereſt; and in the next page maintain, that vice is advantageous to the public †? And indeed it ſeems, upon any ſyſtem of morality, little leſs than a contradiction in terms, to talk of a vice which is in general beneficial to ſociety.

I thought this reaſoning neceſſary, in order to give ſome light to a philoſophical queſtion, which has been much diſputed in BRITAIN. I call it a *philoſophical* queſtion, not a *political* one. For whatever may be the conſequence of ſuch a miraculous transformation of mankind, as would endow them with every ſpecies of virtue, and free them from every ſpecies of vice; this concerns not the magiſtrate, who aims only at poſſibilities. He cannot cure every vice, by ſubſtituting a virtue in its place. Very often he can only cure one vice by another; and in that caſe, he ought to prefer what is leaſt pernicious to ſociety. Luxury, when exceſſive, is the ſource of many ills; but is in general preferable to ſloth and idleneſs, which would commonly ſucceed in its place, and are more pernicious both to private perſons and to the public. When ſloth reigns, a mean uncultivated way of life prevails amongſt individuals, without ſociety, without enjoyment. And if the ſovereign, in ſuch a ſituation, demands the ſervice of his ſubjects, the labour of the ſtate ſuffices only to furniſh the neceſſaries of life to the labourers, and can afford nothing to thoſe who are employed in the public ſervice.

† Fable of the Bees.

ESSAY III.

Of MONEY.

MONEY is not, properly ſpeaking, one of the ſubjects of commerce; but only the inſtrument which men have agreed upon to facilitate the exchange of one commodity for another. 'Tis none of the wheels of trade: 'Tis the oil which renders the motion of the wheels more ſmooth and eaſy. If we conſider any one kingdom by itſelf, 'tis evident, that the greater or leſs plenty of money is of no conſquence; ſince the prices of commodities are always proportioned to the plenty of money, and a crown in HARRY VII.'s time ſerved the ſame purpoſe as a pound does at preſent. 'Tis only the *public* which draws any advantage from the greater plenty of money; and that only in its wars and negociations with foreign ſtates. And this is the reaſon, why all rich and trading countries, from CARTHAGE to BRITAIN and HOLLAND, have employed mercenary troops, which they hired from their poorer neighbours. Were they to make uſe of their native ſubjects, they would find leſs advantage from their ſuperior riches, and from their great plenty of gold and ſilver; ſince the pay of all their ſervants muſt riſe in proportion to the public opulence. Our ſmall army in BRITAIN of 20,000 men are maintained at as great expence as a FRENCH army thrice as numerous. The ENGLISH fleet, during the late war,

required as much money to ſupport it as all the ROMAN legions, which kept the whole world in ſubjection, during the time of the emperors *.

The greater number of people and their greater induſtry are ſerviceable in all caſes; at home and abroad, in private, and in public. But the greater plenty of money, is very limited in its uſe, and may even ſometimes be a loſs to a nation in its commerce with foreigners.

There ſeems to be a happy concurrence of cauſes in human affairs, which check the growth of trade and riches, and hinder them from being confined intirely to one people; as might naturally at firſt be dreaded from the advantages of an eſtabliſhed commerce. Where one nation has got the ſtart of another in trade, 'tis very difficult for the latter to regain the ground it has loſt; becauſe of the ſuperior induſtry and ſkill of the former, and the greater ſtocks, of which its merchants are poſſeſſed, and which enable them to trade for ſo much ſmaller profits. But theſe advantages are compenſated, in ſome

* A private ſoldier in the ROMAN infantry had a denarius a-day, ſomewhat leſs than eight-pence. The ROMAN emperors had commonly 25 legions in pay, which, allowing 5000 men to a legion, makes 125,000. TACIT. *Ann. lib.* 4. 'Tis true, there were alſo auxiliaries to the legions; but their numbers are uncertain, as well as their pay. To conſider only the legionaries, the pay of the private men could not exceed 1,600,000 pound. Now, the parliament in the laſt war commonly allowed for the fleet 2,500,000. We have therefore 900,000 over for the officers and other expences of the ROMAN legions. There ſeem to have been but few officers in the ROMAN armies, in compariſon of what are employed in all our modern troops, except ſome SWISS corps. And theſe officers had very ſmall pay: A centurion, for inſtance, only double a common ſoldier. And as the ſoldiers from their pay (TACIT. *Ann. lib.* 1.) bought their own cloaths, arms, tents, and baggage; this muſt alſo diminiſh conſiderably the other charges of the army. So little expenſive was that mighty government, and ſo eaſy was its yoke over the world. And, indeed, this is the more natural concluſion from the foregoing calculations. For money, after the conqueſt of ÆGYPT, ſeems to have been nearly in as great plenty at ROME, as it is at preſent in the richeſt of the EUROPEAN kingdoms.

meaſure,

measure, by the low price of labour in every nation which has not an extensive commerce, and does not very much abound in gold and silver. Manufactures, therefore, gradually shift their places, leaving those countries and provinces which they have already inriched, and flying to others, whither they are allured by the cheapness of provisions and labour; till they have inriched these also, and are again banished by the same causes. And, in general, we may observe, that the dearness of every thing, from plenty of money, is a disadvantage, which attends an established commerce, and sets bounds to it in every country, by enabling the poorer states to undersel the richer in all foreign markets.

This has made me entertain a great doubt concerning the benefit of *banks* and *paper-credit*, which are so generally esteemed advantageous to every nation. That provisions and labour should become dear by the increase of trade and money, is, in many respects, an inconvenience; but an inconvenience that is unavoidable, and the effect of that public wealth and prosperity which are the end of all our wishes. 'Tis compensated by the advantages which we reap, from the possession of these precious metals, and the weight which they give the nation in all foreign wars and negotiations. But there appears no reason for increasing that inconvenience by a counterfeit money, which foreigners will not accept in any payment, and which any great disorder in the state will reduce to nothing. There are, 'tis true, many people in every rich state, who, having large sums of money, would prefer paper with good security; as being of more easy transport and more safe custody. If the public provide not a bank, private bankers will take advantage of this circumstance; as the goldsmiths formerly did in London, or as the bankers do at present in Dublin: And therefore 'tis better, it may be thought, that a public company should

ſhould enjoy the benefit of that paper-credit, which always will have place in every opulent kingdom. But to endeavour artificially to increaſe ſuch a credit, can never be the intereſt of any trading nation; but muſt lay them under diſadvantages, by increaſing money beyond its natural proportion to labour and commodities, and thereby heightening their price to the merchant and manufacturer. And in this view, it muſt be allowed, that no bank could be more advantageous, than ſuch a one as locked up all the money it received *, and never augmented the circulating coin, as is uſual, by returning part of its treaſure into commerce. A public bank, by this expedient, might cut off much of the dealings of private bankers and money-jobbers; and tho' the ſtate bore the charge of ſalaries to the directors and tellers of this bank, (for, according to the preceding ſuppoſition, it would have no profit from its dealings), the national advantage, reſulting from the low price of labour and the deſtruction of paper-credit, would be a ſufficient compenſation. Not to mention, that ſo large a ſum, lying ready at command, would be a great convenience in times of public danger and diſtreſs; and what part of it was uſed might be replaced at leiſure, when peace and tranquillity were reſtored to the nation.

But of this ſubject of paper-credit we ſhall treat more largely hereafter. And I ſhall finiſh this eſſay on money, by propoſing and explaining two obſervations, which may, perhaps, ſerve to employ the thoughts of our ſpeculative politicians. For to theſe only I all along addreſs myſelf. 'Tis enough that I ſubmit to the ridicule ſometimes, in this age, attached to the character of a philoſopher, without adding to it that which belongs to a projector.

* This is the caſe with the bank of AMSTERDAM.

It

It was a ſhrewd obſervation of ANACHARSIS † the SCYTHIAN, who had never ſeen money in his own country, that gold and ſilver ſeemed to him of no uſe to the GREEKS, but to aſſiſt them in numeration and arithmetic. 'Tis indeed evident, that money is nothing but the repreſentation of labour and commodities, and ſerves only as a method of rating or eſtimating them. Where coin is in greater plenty; as a greater quantity of it is required to repreſent the ſame quantity of goods; it can have no effect, either good or bad, taking a nation within itſelf; no more than it would make any alteration on a merchant's books, if, inſtead of the ARABIAN method of notation, which requires few characters, he ſhould make uſe of the ROMAN, which requires a great many. Nay, the greater quantity of money, like the ROMAN characters, is rather inconvenient, and requires greater trouble both to keep and tranſport it. But notwithſtanding this concluſion, which muſt be allowed juſt, 'tis certain, that ſince the diſcovery of the mines in AMERICA, induſtry has increaſed in all the nations of EUROPE, except in the poſſeſſors of thoſe mines; and this may juſtly be aſcribed, amongſt other reaſons, to the increaſe of gold and ſilver. Accordingly we find, that in every kingdom, into which money begins to flow in greater abundance than formerly, every thing takes a new face; labour and induſtry gain life; the merchant becomes more enterpriſing, the manufacturer more diligent and ſkilful, and even the farmer follows his plough with greater alacrity and attention. This is not eaſily to be accounted for, if we conſider only the influence which a greater abundance of coin has in the kingdom itſelf, by heightening the price of commodities, and obliging every one to pay a greater number of theſe little yellow or white pieces for every thing he purchaſes. And as to fo-

† PLUT. *Quomodo quis ſuos profectus in virtute ſentire poſſit.*

reign

reign trade, it appears, that great plenty of money is rather diſadvantageous, by raiſing the price of every kind of labour.

To account, then, for this phænomenon, we muſt conſider, that tho' the high price of commodities be a neceſſary conſequence of the increaſe of gold and ſilver, yet it follows not immediately upon that increaſe; but ſome time is required before the money circulate thro' the whole ſtate, and make its effects be felt on all ranks of people. At firſt, no alteration is perceived; by degrees, the price riſes, firſt of one commodity, then of another; till the whole at laſt reaches a juſt proportion with the new quantity of ſpecie which is in the kingdom. In my opinion, 'tis only in this interval or intermediate ſituation, between the acquiſition of money and riſe of prices, that the increaſing quantity of gold and ſilver is favourable to induſtry. When any quantity of money is imported into a nation, it is not at firſt diſperſed into many hands; but is confined to the coffers of a few perſons, who immediately ſeek to employ it to the beſt advantage. Here are a ſet of manufacturers or merchants, we ſhall ſuppoſe, who have received returns of gold and ſilver for goods which they ſent to CADIZ. They are thereby enabled to employ more workmen than formerly, who never dream of demanding higher wages, but are glad of employment from ſuch good paymaſters. If workmen become ſcarce, the manufacturer gives higher wages, but at firſt requires an increaſe of labour; and this is willingly ſubmitted to by the artiſan, who can now eat and drink better, to compenſate his additional toil and fatigue. He carries his money to market, where he finds every thing at the ſame price as formerly, but returns with greater quantity and of better kinds, for the uſe of his family. The farmer and gardener, finding, that all their commodities are taken off, apply themſelves with alacrity

alacrity to the raiſing more; and at the ſame time can afford to take better and more cloths from their tradeſmen, whoſe price is the ſame as formerly, and their induſtry only whetted by ſo much new gain. 'Tis eaſy to trace the money in its progreſs thro' the whole commonwealth; where we ſhall find, that it muſt firſt quicken the diligence of every individual, before it increaſe the price of labour.

And that the ſpecie may increaſe to a conſiderable pitch, before it have this latter effect, appears, amongſt other inſtances, from the frequent operations of the FRENCH king on the money; where it was always found, that the augmenting the numerary value did not produce a proportional riſe of the prices, at leaſt for ſome time. In the laſt year of LOUIS XIV. money was raiſed three ſevenths, but prices augmented only one. Corn in FRANCE is now ſold at the ſame price, or for the ſame number of livres it was in 1683; tho' ſilver was then at 30 livres the mark, and is now at 50 *. Not to mention the great addition

* Theſe facts I give upon the authority of Monſ. du TOT in his *Reflexions politiques*, an author of reputation. Tho' I muſt confeſs, that the facts which he advances on other occaſions, are often ſo ſuſpicious, as to make his authority leſs in this matter. However, the general obſervation, that the augmenting the money in FRANCE does not at firſt proportionably augment the prices, is certainly juſt.

By the by, this ſeems to be one of the beſt reaſons which can be given, for a gradual and univerſal augmentation of the money, tho' it has been intirely overlooked in all thoſe volumes which have been wrote on that queſtion by MELON, du TOT, and PARIS de VERNEY. Were all our money, for inſtance, recoined, and a penny's worth of ſilver taken from every ſhilling, the new ſhilling would probably purchaſe every thing that could have been bought by the old; the prices of every thing would thereby be inſenſibly diminiſhed; foreign trade enlivened; and domeſtic induſtry, by the circulation of a greater number of pounds and ſhillings, would receive ſome increaſe and encouragement. In executing ſuch a project, 'twould be better to make the new ſhilling paſs for 24 half-pence, in order to preſerve the illuſion, and make it be taken for the ſame. And as a recoinage of our ſilver

addition of gold and silver, which may have come into that kingdom since the former period.

From the whole of this reasoning we may conclude, that 'tis of no manner of consequence, with regard to the domestic happiness of a state, whether money be in a greater or less quantity. The good policy of the magistrate consists only in keeping it, if possible, still increasing; because, by that means, he keeps alive a spirit of industry in the nation, and increases the stock of labour, in which consists all real power and riches. A nation whose money decreases, is actually, at that time, much weaker and more miserable than another nation, which possesses no more money, but is on the increasing hand. This will be easily accounted for, if we consider, that the alterations in the quantity of money, either on the one side or the other, are not immediately attended with proportionable alterations in the prices of commodities. There is always an interval before matters be adjusted to their new situation; and this interval is as pernicious to industry when gold and silver are diminishing, as it is advantageous when these metals are increasing. The workman has not the same employment from the manufacturer and merchant; tho' he pays the same price for every thing in the market. The farmer cannot dispose of his corn and cattle; tho' he must pay the same rent to his landlord. The poverty, and beggary, and sloth, which must ensue, are easily foreseen.

II. The second observation which I proposed to make with regard to money, may be explained after the following manner. There are some kingdoms, and many provinces in EUROPE, (and all of them were once in the same condition) where money is so scarce, that the land-

silver begins to be requisite, by the continual wearing of our shillings and sixpences, it may be doubtful, whether we ought to imitate the example in King WILLIAM's reign, when the clipt money was raised to the old standard.

lord

lord can get none at all from his tenants; but is obliged to take his rent in kind, and either to consume it himself, or transport it to places where he may find a market. In those countries, the prince can levy few or no taxes, but in the same manner: And as he will receive very small benefit from impositions so paid, 'tis evident that such a kingdom has very little force even at home; and cannot maintain fleets and armies to the same extent, as if every part of it abounded in gold and silver. There is surely a greater disproportion betwixt the force of GERMANY at present and what it was three centuries ago †, than there is in its industry, people, and manufactures. The AUSTRIAN dominions in the empire are in general well peopled and well cultivated, and are of great extent; but have not a proportionable weight in the balance of EUROPE; proceeding, as is commonly supposed, from the scarcity of money. How do all these facts agree with that principle of reason, that the quantity of gold and silver is in itself altogether indifferent? According to that principle, where ever a sovereign has numbers of subjects, and these have plenty of commodities, he should of course be great and powerful, and they rich and happy, independent of the greater or lesser abundance of the precious metals. These admit of divisions and subdivisions to a great extent; and where they would become so small as to be in danger of being lost, 'tis easy to mix them with a baser metal, as is practised in some countries of EUROPE; and by that means raise them to a bulk more sensible and convenient. They still serve the same purposes of exchange, whatever their number may be, or whatever colour they may be supposed to have.

† The ITALIANS gave to the Emperor MAXIMILIAN, the nickname of POCCI-DANARI. None of the enterprises of that prince ever succeeded, for want of money.

To these difficulties I answer, that the effect here supposed to flow from scarcity of money, really arises from the manners and customs of the inhabitants; and that we mistake, as is too usual, a collateral effect for a cause. The contradiction is only apparent; but it requires some thought and reflection to discover the principles by which we can reconcile *reason* to *experience*.

It seems a maxim almost self-evident, that the prices of every thing depend on the proportion between commodities and money, and that any considerable alteration on either of these has the same effect, either of heightening or lowering the prices. Increase the commodities, they become cheaper; increase the money, they rise in their value. As, on the other hand, a diminution of the former, and that of the latter, have contrary tendencies.

'Tis also evident that the prices do not so much depend on the absolute quantity of commodities and that of money, which are in a nation, as in that of the commodities, which come or may come to market, and of the money which circulates. If the coin be locked up in chests, 'tis the same thing with regard to prices, as if it were annihilated: If the commodities be hoarded in granaries, a like effect follows. As the money and commodities, in these cases, never meet, they cannot affect each other. Were we, at any time, to form conjectures concerning the price of provisions, the corn which the farmer must reserve for the maintenance of himself and family, ought never to enter into the estimation. 'Tis only the overplus, compared to the demand, that determines the value.

To apply these principles, we must consider, that in the first and more uncultivated ages of any state, ere fancy has confounded her wants with those of nature, men, contented with the productions of their own fields,

or with thoſe rude preparations which they themſelves can work upon them, have little occaſion for exchange, or at leaſt for money, which, by agreement, is the common meaſure of exchange. The wool of the farmer's own flock, ſpun in his own family, and wrought by a neighbouring weaver, who receives his payment in corn or wool, ſuffices for furniture and cloathing. The carpenter, the ſmith, the maſon, the tailor, are retained by wages of a like nature; and the landlord himſelf, dwelling in the neighbourhood, is contented to receive his rent in the commodities raiſed by the farmer. The greateſt part of theſe he conſumes at home, in ruſtic hoſpitality: The reſt, perhaps, he diſpoſes of for money to the neighbouring town, whence he draws the few materials of his expence and luxury.

But after men begin to refine on all theſe enjoyments, and live not always at home, nor are contented with what can be raiſed in their neighbourhood, there is more exchange and commerce of all kinds, and more money enters into that exchange. The tradeſmen will not be paid in corn; becauſe they want ſomething more than barely to eat. The farmer goes beyond his own pariſh for the commodities he purchaſes, and cannot always carry his commodities to the merchant who ſupplies him. The landlord lives in the capital, or in a foreign country; and demands his rent in gold and ſilver, which can eaſily be tranſported to him. Great undertakers, and manufacturers, and merchants, ariſe in every commodity; and theſe can conveniently deal in nothing but in ſpecie. And conſequently, in this ſituation of ſociety, the coin enters into many more contracts, and by that means is much more employed than in the former.

The neceſſary effect is, that, provided the money does not increaſe in the nation, every thing muſt become much cheaper in times of induſtry and refinement, than

in rude, uncultivated ages. 'Tis the proportion between the circulating money, and the commodities in the market, which determines the prices. Goods that are conſumed at home, or exchanged with other goods in the neighbourhood, never come to market; they affect not in the leaſt the current ſpecie; with regard to it they are as if totally annihilated; and conſequently this method of uſing them ſinks the proportion on the ſide of the commodities, and increaſes the prices. But after money enters into all contracts and ſales, and is every where the meaſure of exchange, the ſame national caſh has a much greater taſk to perform; all commodities are then in the market; the ſphere of circulation is enlarged; 'tis the ſame caſe as if that individual ſum were to ſerve a larger kingdom; and therefore, the proportion being here leſſened on the ſide of the money, every thing muſt become cheaper, and the prices gradually fall.

By the moſt exact computations that have been formed all over EUROPE, after making allowance for the alteration in the numerary value or the denomination, 'tis found, that the prices of all things have only riſen three, or at moſt, four times, ſince the diſcovery of the WEST INDIES. But will any one aſſert, that there is not much more than four times the coin in EUROPE, that was in the fifteenth century, and the centuries preceding it? The SPANIARDS and PORTUGUESE from their mines, the ENGLISH, FRENCH, and DUTCH, by their AFRICAN trade, and by their interlopers in the WEST INDIES, bring home about ſix millions a-year, of which not above a third part goes to the EAST INDIES. This ſum alone in ten years would probably double the ancient ſtock of money in EUROPE. And no other ſatisfactory reaſon can be given, why all prices have not riſen to a much more exorbitant height, except that derived from a change

of

of cuſtoms and manners. Beſides that more commodities are produced by additional induſtry, the ſame commodities come more to market, after men depart from their ancient ſimplicity of manners. And though this increaſe has not been equal to that of money, it has, however, been conſiderable, and has preſerved the proportion between coin and commodities nearer the ancient ſtandard.

Were the queſtion propoſed, Which of theſe methods of living in the people, the ſimple or refined, is the moſt advantageous to the ſtate or public? I ſhould, without much ſcruple, prefer the latter, in a view to politics at leaſt; and ſhould produce this as an additional reaſon for the encouragement of trade and manufactures.

When men live in the ancient ſimple manner, and ſupply all their neceſſaries from domeſtic induſtry or from the neighbourhood, the ſovereign can levy no taxes in money from a conſiderable part of his ſubjects; and if he will impoſe on them any burdens, he muſt take his payment in commodities, with which alone they abound; a method attended with ſuch great and obvious inconveniencies, that they need not here be inſiſted on. All the money he can pretend to raiſe, muſt be from his principal cities, where alone it circulates; and theſe, 'tis evident, cannot afford him ſo much as the whole ſtate could, did gold and ſilver circulate through the whole. But beſides this obvious diminution of the revenue, there is alſo another cauſe of the poverty of the public in ſuch a ſituation. Not only the ſovereign receives leſs money, but the ſame money goes not ſo far as in times of induſtry and general commerce. Every thing is dearer, where the gold and ſilver are ſuppoſed equal; and that becauſe fewer commodities come to market, and the whole coin bears a higher proportion to what is to be

purchaſed by it; whence alone the prices of every thing are fixed and determined.

Here then we may learn the fallacy of the remark, often to be met with in hiſtorians, and even in common converſation, that any particular ſtate is weak, tho' fertile, populous, and well cultivated, merely becauſe it wants money. It appears, that the want of money can never injure any ſtate within itſelf: For men and commodities are the real ſtrength of any community. 'Tis the ſimple manner of living which here hurts the public, by confining the gold and ſilver to few hands, and preventing its univerſal diffuſion and circulation. On the contrary, induſtry and refinements of all kinds incorporate it with the whole ſtate, however ſmall its quantity may be: They digeſt it into every vein, ſo to ſpeak; and make it enter into every tranſaction and contract. No hand is entirely empty of it. And as the prices of every thing fall by that means, the ſovereign has a double advantage: He may draw money by his taxes from every part of the ſtate; and what he receives, goes farther in every purchaſe and payment.

We may infer, from a compariſon of prices, that money is not more plentiful in CHINA, than it was in EUROPE three centuries ago: But what immenſe power is that empire poſſeſſed of, if we may judge by the civil and military liſt maintained by it? POLYBIUS * tells us, that proviſions were ſo cheap in ITALY during his time, that in ſome places the ſtated club at the inns was a *ſemis* ahead, little more than a farthing! Yet the ROMAN power had even then ſubdued the whole known world. About a century before that period, the CARTHAGINIAN ambaſſador ſaid, by way of raillery, that no people lived more ſociably amongſt themſelves than the ROMANS; for that in every entertainment, which, as foreign mi-

* Lib. 2. cap. 15.

niſters,

niſters, they received, they ſtill obſerved the ſame plate at every table *. The abſolute quantity of the precious metals is a matter of great indifference. There are only two circumſtances of any importance, *viz.* their gradual increaſe, and their thorough concoction and circulation thro' the ſtate; and the influence of both theſe circumſtances has been here explained.

In the following Eſſay we ſhall ſee an inſtance of a like fallacy as that above mentioned; where a collateral effect is taken for a cauſe, and where a conſequence is aſcribed to the plenty of money; tho' it be really owing to a change in the manners and cuſtoms of the people.

* PLIN. lib. 33 cap. 11.

ESSAY IV.

Of INTEREST.

NOTHING is eſteemed a more certain ſign of the flouriſhing condition of any nation than the lowneſs of intereſt: And with reaſon; tho' I believe the cauſe is ſomewhat different from what is commonly apprehended. The lowneſs of intereſt is generally aſcribed to the plenty of money. But money, however plentiful, has no other effect, *if fixed*, than to raiſe the price of labour. Silver is more common than gold; and therefore you receive a greater quantity of it for the ſame commodities. But do you pay leſs intereſt for it? Intereſt in BATAVIA and JAMAICA is at 10 *per cent.* in PORTUGAL at 6; tho' theſe places, as we may learn from the prices of every thing, abound much more in gold and ſilver than either LONDON and AMSTERDAM.

Were all the gold in ENGLAND annihilated at once, and one and twenty ſhillings ſubſtituted in the place of every guinea, would money be more plentiful or intereſt lower? No ſurely: We ſhould only uſe ſilver inſtead of gold. Were gold rendered as common as ſilver, and ſilver as common as copper; would money be more plentiful or intereſt lower? We may aſſuredly give the ſame anſwer. Our ſhillings would then be yellow, and our halfpence white; and we ſhould have no guineas. No

other difference would ever be obſerved; no alteration on commerce, manufactures, navigation, or intereſt; unleſs we imagine, that the colour of the metal is of any conſequence.

Now, what is ſo viſible in theſe greater variations of ſcarcity or abundance of the precious metals, muſt hold in all inferior changes. If the multiplying gold and ſilver fifteen times makes no difference, much leſs can the doubling or tripling them. All augmentation has no other effect than to heighten the price of labour and commodities; and even this variation is little more than that of a name. In the progreſs towards theſe changes, the augmentation may have ſome influence, by exciting induſtry; but after the prices are ſettled, ſuitable to the new abundance of gold and ſilver, it has no manner of influence.

An effect always holds proportion with its cauſe. Prices have riſen about four times ſince the diſcovery of the INDIES; and 'tis probable gold and ſilver have multiplied much more: But intereſt has not fallen much above half. The rate of intereſt, therefore, is not derived from the quantity of the precious metals.

Money having merely a fictitious value, ariſing from the agreement and convention of men, the greater or leſs plenty of it is of no conſequence, if we conſider a nation within itſelf; and the quantity of ſpecie, when once fixed, tho' never ſo large, has no other effect, than to oblige every one to tell out a greater number of thoſe ſhining bits of metal, for cloaths, furniture, or equipage, without increaſing any one convenience of life. If a man borrows money to build a houſe, he then carries home a greater load; becauſe the ſtone, timber, lead, glaſs, &c. with the labour of the maſons and carpenters, are repreſented by a greater quantity of gold and ſilver.

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But as theſe metals are conſidered merely as repreſentations, there can no alteration ariſe, from their bulk or quantity, their weight or colour, either upon their real value or their intereſt. The ſame intereſt, in all caſes, bears the ſame proportion to the ſum. And if you lent me ſo much labour and ſo many commodities; by receiving five *per cent.* you receive always proportional labour and commodities, however repreſented, whether by yellow or white coin, whether by a pound or an ounce. 'Tis in vain, therefore, to look for the cauſe of the fall or riſe of intereſt in the greater or leſs quantity of gold and ſilver which is fixed in any nation.

High intereſt ariſes from *three* circumſtances; A great demand for borrowing; little riches to ſupply that demand; and great profits ariſing from commerce. And theſe circumſtances are a clear proof of the ſmall advance of commerce and induſtry, not of the ſcarcity of gold and ſilver. Low intereſt, on the other hand, proceeds from the three oppoſite circumſtances: A ſmall demand for borrowing; great riches to ſupply that demand; and ſmall profits ariſing from commerce. And theſe circumſtances are all connected together, and proceed from the increaſe of induſtry and commerce, not of gold and ſilver. We ſhall endeavour to prove theſe points as fully and diſtinctly as poſſible; and ſhall begin with the cauſes and the effects of a great or ſmall demand for borrowing.

When a people have emerged ever ſo little from a ſavage ſtate, and their numbers have increaſed beyond the original multitude, there muſt immediately ariſe an inequality of property; and while ſome poſſeſs large tracts of land, others are confined within narrow limits, and ſome are entirely without any landed property. Thoſe who poſſeſs more land than they can labour, employ thoſe who poſſeſs none, and agree to receive a determinate

nate part of the product. Thus the *landed* interest is immediately established; nor is there any settled government, however rude, in which affairs are not on this footing. Of these proprietors of land, some must presently discover themselves to be of different tempers from others; and while one would willingly store up the product of his land for futurity, another desires to consume at present what should suffice for many years. But as the spending a settled revenue is a way of life entirely without occupation; men have so much need of somewhat to fix and engage them, that pleasures, such as they are, will be the pursuit of the greatest part of the landholders, and the prodigals amongst them will always be more numerous than the misers. In a state, therefore, where there is nothing but a landed interest, as there is little frugality, the borrowers must be very numerous, and the rate of interest must hold proportion to it. The difference depends not on the quantity of money, but on the habits and manners which prevail. By this alone the demand for borrowing is increased or diminished. Were money so plentiful as to make an egg be sold for sixpence; so long as there are only landed gentry and peasants in the state, the borrowers must be numerous, and interest high. The rent for the same farm would be heavier and more bulky: But the same idleness of the landlord, with the higher prices of commodities, would dissipate it in the same time, and produce the same necessity and demand for borrowing.

Nor is the case different with regard to the *second* circumstance which we proposed to consider, *viz.* the great or little riches to supply this demand. This effect also depends on the habits and ways of living of the people, not on the quantity of gold and silver. In order to have in any state, a great number of lenders, 'tis not sufficient nor requisite that there be great abundance of precious metals. 'Tis only requisite that the property or command

command of that quantity, which is in the ſtate, whether great or ſmall, ſhould be collected in particular hands, ſo as to form conſiderable ſums, or compoſe a great monied intereſt. This begets a number of lenders, and ſinks the rate of uſury; and this, I ſhall venture to affirm, depends not on the quantity of ſpecie, but on particular manners and cuſtoms, which make the ſpecie gather into ſeparate ſums or maſſes of conſiderable value.

For ſuppoſe, that, by miracle, every man in BRITAIN ſhould have five pounds ſlipt into his pocket in one night; this would much more than double the whole money that is at preſent in the kingdom; and yet there would not next day, nor for ſome time, be any more lenders, nor any variation on the intereſt. And were there nothing but landlords and peaſants in the ſtate, this money, however abundant, could never gather into ſums; and would only ſerve to increaſe the prices of every thing, without any farther conſequence. The prodigal landlord diſſipates it, as faſt as he receives it; and the beggarly peaſant has no means, nor view, nor ambition of obtaining above a bare livelihood. The overplus of borrowers above that of lenders continuing ſtill the ſame, there will follow no reduction of intereſt. That depends upon another principle; and muſt proceed from an increaſe of induſtry and frugality, of arts and commerce.

Every thing uſeful to the life of man ariſes from the ground; but few things ariſe in that condition which is requiſite to render them uſeful. There muſt, therefore, beſide the peaſants, and the proprietors of land, be another rank of men, who, receiving from the former, the rude materials, work them into their proper form, and retain part for their own uſe and ſubſiſtence. In the infancy of ſociety, theſe contracts betwixt the artiſans and the peaſants, and betwixt one ſpecies of artiſans and another, are commonly entered into immediately by the perſons

perſons themſelves, who, being neighbours, are eaſily acquainted with each other's neceſſities, and can lend their mutual aſſiſtance to ſupply them. But when men's induſtry increaſes, and their views enlarge, 'tis found, that the moſt remote parts of the ſtate can aſſiſt each other as well as the more contiguous, and that this intercourſe of good offices may be carried on to the greateſt extent and intricacy. Hence the origin of *merchants*, the moſt uſeful race of men in the whole ſociety, who ſerve as agents between thoſe parts of the ſtate, that are wholly unacquainted, and are ignorant of each other's neceſſities. Here are in a city fifty workmen in ſilk and linen, and a thouſand cuſtomers; and theſe two ranks of men, ſo neceſſary to each other, can never rightly meet, till one man erects a ſhop, to which all the workmen and all the cuſtomers repair. In this province, graſs riſes in abundance: The inhabitants abound in cheeſe, and butter, and cattle; but want bread and corn, which, in a neighbouring province, are in too great abundance for the uſe of the inhabitants. One man diſcovers this. He brings corn from the one province, and returns with cattle; and ſupplying the wants of both, he is, ſo far, a common benefactor. As the people increaſe in numbers and induſtry, the difficulty of their intercourſe increaſes: The buſineſs of the agency or merchandize becomes more intricate; and divides, ſubdivides, compounds, and mixes to a greater variety. In all theſe tranſactions, 'tis neceſſary, and reaſonable, that a conſiderable part of the commodities and labour ſhould belong to the merchant, to whom, in a great meaſure, they are owing. And theſe commodities he will ſometimes preſerve in kind, or more commonly convert into money, which is their common repreſentation. If gold and ſilver have increaſed in the ſtate together with the induſtry, it will require a great quantity of theſe metals to repreſent a great quantity of commodities and labour.

If

If induſtry alone has increaſed, the prices of every thing muſt ſink, and a very ſmall quantity of ſpecie will ſerve as a repreſentation.

There is no craving or demand of the human mind more conſtant and inſatiable than that for exerciſe and employment; and this deſire ſeems the foundation of moſt of our paſſions and purſuits. Deprive a man of all buſineſs and ſerious occupation, he runs reſtleſs from one amuſement to another; and the weight and oppreſſion which he feels from idleneſs, is ſo great, that he forgets the ruin which muſt follow from his immoderate expences. Give him a more harmleſs way of employing his mind or body, he is ſatisfied, and feels no longer that inſatiable thirſt after pleaſure. But if the employment you give him be profitable, eſpecially if the profit be attached to every particular exertion of induſtry, he has gain ſo often in his eye, that he acquires, by degrees, a paſſion for it, and knows no ſuch pleaſure as that of ſeeing the daily increaſe of his fortune. And this is the reaſon why trade increaſes frugality, and why, among merchants, there is the ſame overplus of miſers above prodigals, as, among the poſſeſſors of land, there is the contrary.

Commerce increaſes induſtry, by conveying it readily from one member of the ſtate to another, and allowing none of it to periſh or become uſeleſs. It increaſes frugality, by giving occupation to men, and employing them in the arts of gain, which ſoon engage their affection, and remove all reliſh for pleaſure and expence. 'Tis an infallible conſequence of all induſtrious profeſſions, to beget frugality, and make the love of gain prevail over the love of pleaſure. Among lawyers and phyſicians who have any practice, there are many more who live within their income, than who exceed it, or even live up to it. But lawyers and phyſicians beget no induſtry; and

and 'tis even at the expence of others they acquire their riches; ſo that they are ſure to diminiſh the poſſeſſions of ſome of their fellow-citizens as faſt as they increaſe their own. Merchants, on the contrary, beget induſtry, by ſerving as canals to convey it through every corner of the ſtate: and at the ſame time by their frugality, they acquire great power over that induſtry, and collect a large property in the labour and commodities, which they are the chief inſtruments in producing. There is no other profeſſion, therefore, except merchandize, which can make the monied intereſt conſiderable, or, in other words, can increaſe induſtry, and, by alſo increaſing frugality, give a great command of that induſtry to particular members of the ſociety. Without commerce, the ſtate muſt conſiſt chiefly of landed gentry, whoſe prodigality and expence make a continual demand for borrowing; and of peaſants, who have no ſums to ſupply that demand. The money never gathers into large ſtocks or ſums, which can be lent at intereſt. It is diſperſed into numberleſs hands, who either ſquander it in idle ſhow and magnificence, or employ it in the purchaſe of the common neceſſaries of life. Commerce alone aſſembles it into conſiderable ſums; and this effect it has merely from the induſtry which it begets, and the frugality which it inſpires, independent of that particular quantity of precious metal which may circulate in the ſtate.

Thus an increaſe of commerce, by a neceſſary conſequence, raiſes a great number of lenders, and by that means produces a lowneſs of intereſt. We muſt now conſider how far this increaſe of commerce diminiſhes the profits ariſing from that profeſſion, and gives riſe to the *third* circumſtance requiſite to produce a lowneſs of intereſt.

It may be proper to obſerve on this head, that low intereſt and low profits of merchandize are two events, that

that mutually forward each other, and are both originally derived from that extenſive commerce, which produces opulent merchants, and renders the monied intereſt conſiderable. Where merchants poſſeſs great ſtocks, whether repreſented by few or many pieces of metal, it muſt frequently happen, that when they either become tired of buſineſs, or have heirs unwilling or unfit to engage in commerce, a great deal of theſe riches naturally ſeeks an annual and ſecure revenue. The plenty diminiſhes the price, and makes the lenders accept of a low intereſt. This conſideration obliges many to keep their ſtocks in trade, and rather be content with low profits than diſpoſe of their money at an under value. On the other hand, when commerce has become very extenſive, and employs very large ſtocks, there muſt ariſe rivalſhips among the merchants, which diminiſh the profits of trade, at the ſame time that they increaſe the trade itſelf. The low profits of merchandize induce the merchants to accept more willingly of a low intereſt, when they leave off buſineſs, and begin to indulge themſelves in eaſe and indolence. It is needleſs, therefore, to enquire which of theſe circumſtances, *viz. low intereſts or low profits*, is the cauſe, and which the effect? They both ariſe from an extenſive commerce, and mutually forward each other. No man will accept of low profits, where he can have high intereſt; and no man will accept of low intereſt, where he can have high profits. An extenſive commerce, by producing large ſtocks, diminiſhes both intereſts and profits; and is always aſſiſted in its diminution of the one, by the proportional ſinking of the other. I may add, that as low profits ariſe from the increaſe of commerce and induſtry, they ſerve in their turn to the farther increaſe of commerce, by rendering the commodities cheaper, encouraging the conſumption, and heightening the induſtry. And thus, if we conſider the

the whole connection of cauſes and effects, intereſt is the true barometer of the ſtate, and its lowneſs is a ſign almoſt infallible of the flouriſhing of a people. It proves the increaſe of induſtry, and its prompt circulation thro' the whole ſtate, little inferior to a demonſtration. And tho', perhaps, it may not be impoſſible but a ſudden and a great check to commerce may have a momentary effect of the ſame kind, by throwing ſo many ſtocks out of trade; it muſt be attended with ſuch miſery and want of employment in the poor, that, beſides its ſhort duration, it will not be poſſible to miſtake the one caſe for the other.

Thoſe who have aſſerted, that the plenty of money was the cauſe of low intereſt, ſeem to have taken a collateral effect for a cauſe; ſince the ſame induſtry which ſinks the intereſt, does commonly acquire great abundance of the precious metals. A variety of fine manufactures, with vigilant enterpriſing merchants, will ſoon draw money to a ſtate, if it be any where to be found in the world. The ſame cauſe, by multiplying the conveniencies of life, and increaſing induſtry, collects great riches into the hands of perſons, who are not proprietors of land, and produces by that means a lowneſs of intereſt. But tho' both theſe effects, plenty of money and low intereſt, naturally ariſe from commerce and induſtry, they are altogether independent of each other. For ſuppoſe a nation removed into the *Pacific* ocean, without any foreign commerce, or any knowledge of navigation: Suppoſe, that this nation poſſeſſes always the ſame ſtock of coin, but is continually increaſing in its numbers and induſtry: 'Tis evident, that the price of every commodity muſt gradually diminiſh in that kingdom; ſince 'tis the proportion between money and any ſpecies of goods, which fixes their mutual value; and, upon the preſent ſuppoſition, the conveniencies of life

become every day more abundant, without any alteration on the current ſpecie. A leſs quantity of money, therefore, amongſt this people, will make a rich man, during the times of induſtry, than would ſerve to that purpoſe, in ignorant and ſlothful ages. Leſs money will build a houſe, portion a daughter, buy an eſtate, ſupport a manufactory, or maintain a family and equipage. Theſe are the uſes for which men borrow money; and therefore, the greater or leſs quantity of it in a ſtate has no influence on the intereſt. But 'tis evident, that the greater or leſs ſtock of labour and commodities muſt have a great influence; ſince we really and in effect borrow theſe, when we take money upon intereſt. 'Tis true, when commerce is extended all over the globe, the moſt induſtrious nations always abound moſt with the precious metals: So that low intereſt and plenty of money are in fact almoſt inſeparable. But ſtill 'tis of conſequence to know the principle whence any phænomenon ariſes, and to diſtinguiſh betwixt a cauſe and a concomitant effect. Beſides that the ſpeculation is curious, it may frequently be of uſe in the conduct of public affairs. At leaſt, it muſt be owned, that nothing can be of more uſe than to improve, by practice, the method of reaſoning on theſe ſubjects, which of all others are the moſt important; tho' they are commonly treated in the looſeſt and moſt careleſs manner.

Another reaſon of this popular miſtake with regard to the cauſe of low intereſt, ſeems to be the inſtance of ſome nations; where, after a ſudden acquiſition of money, or of the precious metals, by means of foreign conqueſt, the intereſt has fallen, not only among them, but in all the neighbouring ſtates, as ſoon as that money was diſperſed, and had inſinuated itſelf into every corner. Thus, intereſt in SPAIN fell near a half immediately after the diſcovery of the WEST INDIES, as we are informed by

GARCILASSO DE LA VEGA: And it has been ever ſince gradually ſinking in every kingdom of EUROPE. Intereſt in ROME, after the conqueſt of EGYPT, fell from 6 to 4 *per cent.* as we learn from DION *.

The cauſes of the ſinking of intereſt upon ſuch an event, ſeem different in the conquering country and in the neighbouring ſtates; but in neither of them can we juſtly aſcribe that effect merely to the increaſe of gold and ſilver.

In the conquering country, 'tis natural to imagine, that this new acquiſition of money will fall into a few hands, and be gathered into large ſums, which ſeek a ſecure revenue, either by the purchaſe of land or by intereſt; and conſequently the ſame effect follows, for a little time, as if there had been a great acceſſion of induſtry and commerce. The increaſe of lenders above the borrowers ſinks the intereſt; and ſo much the faſter, if thoſe who have acquired thoſe large ſums, find no induſtry or commerce in the ſtate, and no method of employing their money but by lending it at intereſt. But after this new maſs of gold and ſilver has been digeſted, and has circulated thro' the whole ſtate, affairs will ſoon return to their former ſituation; while the landlords and new money-holders, living idly, ſquander above their income; and the former daily contract debt, and the latter incroach on their ſtock till its final extinction. The whole money may ſtill be in the ſtate, and make itſelf felt by the increaſe of prices: But not being now collected into any large maſſes or ſtocks, the diſproportion between the borrowers and lenders is the ſame as formerly, and conſequently the high intereſt returns.

Accordingly we find, in ROME, that ſo early as TIBERIUS's time, intereſt had again mounted to 6 *per*

* Lib. 51.

cent.

cent. * tho' no accident had happened to drain the empire of money. In Trajan's time, money lent on mortgages in Italy, bore 6 *per cent.* †; on common securities in Bithynia, 12 ‡. And if interest in Spain has not risen to its old pitch; this can be ascribed to nothing but the continuance of the same cause that sunk it, *viz.* the large fortunes continually made in the Indies, which come over to Spain from time to time, and supply the demand of the borrowers. By this accidental and extraneous cause, more money is to be lent in Spain, that is, more money is collected into large sums, than would otherwise be found in a state, where there are so little commerce and industry.

As to the reduction of interest, which has followed in England, France, and other kingdoms of Europe, that have no mines, it has been gradual; and has not proceeded from the increase of money, considered merely in itself; but from the increase of industry, which is the natural effect of the former increase, in that interval, before it raises the price of labour and provisions. For to return to the foregoing supposition; if the industry of England had risen as much from other causes, (and that rise might easily have happened, tho' the stock of money had remained the same) must not all the same consequences have followed, which we observe at present? The same people would, in that case, be found in the kingdom, the same commodities, the same industry, manufactures, and commerce; and consequently the same merchants, with the same stocks, that is, with the same command over labour and commodities, only represented by a smaller number of white or yellow

* Columella, lib. 3. cap. 3.

† Plinii epist. lib. 7. ep. 18.

‡ Id. lib. 10. ep. 62.

pieces; which being a circumſtance of no moment, would only affect the waggoner, porter, and trunk-maker. Luxury, therefore, manufactures, arts, induſtry, frugality, flouriſhing equally as at preſent, 'tis evident that intereſt muſt alſo have been as low; ſince that is the neceſſary reſult of all theſe circumſtances; ſo far as they determine the profits of commerce, and the proportion between the borrowers and lenders in any ſtate.

ESSAY

ESSAY V.

Of the BALANCE of TRADE.

'TIS very usual, in nations ignorant of the nature of commerce, to prohibit the exportation of commodities, and to preserve among themselves whatever they think valuable and useful. They consider not, that, in this prohibition, they act directly contrary to their intention; and that the more is exported of any commodity, the more will be raised at home, of which they themselves will always have the first offer.

'Tis well known to the learned, that the antient laws of ATHENS rendered the exportation of figs criminal; that being supposed a species of fruit so excellent in ATTICA, that the ATHENIANS esteemed it too delicious for the palate of any foreigner. And in this ridiculous prohibition they were so much in earnest, that reformers were thence called *sycophants* among them, from two GREEK words, which signify *figs* and *discoverer* †. There are proofs in many old acts of parliament of the same ignorance in the nature of commerce, particularly in the reign of EDWARD III. And to this day, in FRANCE, the exportation of corn is almost always prohibited; in order, as they say, to prevent famines; tho' 'tis evident,

† PLUT. *De Curiositate.*

that nothing contributes more to the frequent famines which ſo much diſtreſs that fertile country.

The ſame jealous fear, with regard to money, has alſo prevailed among ſeveral nations; and it required both reaſon and experience to convince any people, that theſe prohibitions ſerve to no other purpoſe than to raiſe the exchange againſt them, and produce a ſtill greater exportation.

Theſe errors, one may ſay, are groſs and palpable; But there ſtill prevails, even in nations well acquainted with commerce, a ſtrong jealouſy with regard to the balance of trade, and a fear, that all their gold and ſilver may be leaving them. This ſeems to me, almoſt in every caſe, a very groundleſs apprehenſion; and I ſhould as ſoon dread, that all our ſprings and rivers ſhould be exhauſted, as that money ſhould abandon a kingdom where there are people and induſtry. Let us carefully preſerve theſe latter advantages; and we need never be apprehenſive of loſing the former.

'Tis eaſy to obſerve, that all calculations concerning the balance of trade are founded on very uncertain facts and ſuppoſitions. The cuſtomhouſe-books are allowed to be an inſufficient ground of reaſoning; nor is the rate of exchange much better; unleſs we conſider it with all nations, and know alſo the proportions of the ſeveral ſums remitted; which one may ſafely pronounce impoſſible. Every man who has ever reaſoned on this ſubject, has always proved his theory, whatever it was, by facts and calculations, and by an enumeration of all the commodities ſent to all foreign kingdoms.

The writings of Mr. GEE ſtruck the nation with an univerſal panic, when they ſaw it plainly demonſtrated, by a detail of particulars, that the balance was againſt them for ſo conſiderable a ſum as muſt leave them without

out a ſingle ſhilling in five or ſix years. But luckily, twenty years have ſince elapſed, with an expenſive foreign war; and yet it is commonly ſuppoſed, that money is ſtill more plentiful among us than in any former period.

Nothing can be more entertaining on this head than Dr. SWIFT; an author ſo quick in diſcerning the miſtakes and abſurdities of others. He ſays, in his *ſhort view of the ſtate of* IRELAND, that the whole caſh of that kingdom amounted but to 500,000 *l.*; that out of this they remitted every year a neat million to ENGLAND, and had ſcarce any other ſource from which they could compenſate themſelves, and little other foreign trade but the importation of FRENCH wines, for which they paid ready money. The conſequence of this ſituation, which muſt be owned to be diſadvantageous, was, that in a courſe of three years, the current money of IRELAND, from 500,000 *l.* was reduced to leſs than two. And at preſent, I ſuppoſe, in a courſe of 30 years, it is abſolutely nothing. Yet I know not how, that opinion of the advance of riches in IRELAND, which gave the Doctor ſo much indignation, ſeems ſtill to continue, and gain ground with every body.

In ſhort, this apprehenſion of the wrong balance of trade, appears of ſuch a nature, that it diſcovers itſelf, where-ever one is out of humour with the miniſtry, or is in low ſpirits; and as it can never be refuted by a particular detail of all the exports, which counterbalance the imports, it may here be proper to form a general argument, which may prove the impoſſibility of that event, as long as we preſerve our people and our induſtry.

Suppoſe four fifths of all the money in BRITAIN to be annihilated in one night, and the nation reduced to the ſame condition, with regard to ſpecie, as in the reigns

of the HARRYS and EDWARDS, what would be the conſequence? Muſt not the price of all labour and commodities ſink in proportion, and every thing be ſold as cheap as they were in thoſe ages? What nation could then diſpute with us in any foreign market, or pretend to navigate or to ſell manufactures at the ſame price, which to us would afford ſufficient profit? In how little time, therefore, muſt this bring back the money which we had loſt, and raiſe us to the level of all the neighbouring nations? Where, after we have arrived, we immediately loſe the advantage of the cheapneſs of labour and commodities; and the farther flowing in of money is ſtopped by our fulneſs and repletion.

Again, ſuppoſe, that all the money of BRITAIN were multiplied fivefold in a night, muſt not the contrary effect follow? Muſt not all labour and commodities riſe to ſuch an exorbitant height, that no neighbouring nations could afford to buy from us; while their commodities, on the other hand, became ſo cheap in compariſon, that, in ſpite of all the laws which could be formed, they would be run in upon us, and our money flow out; till we fall to a level with foreigners, and loſe that great ſuperiority of riches, which had laid us under ſuch diſadvantages?

Now, 'tis evident, that the ſame cauſes which would correct theſe exorbitant inequalities, were they to happen miraculouſly, muſt prevent their happening in the common courſe of nature, and muſt for ever, in all the neighbouring nations, preſerve money nearly proportionable to the art and induſtry of each nation. All water, where-ever it communicates, remains always at a level. Aſk naturaliſts the reaſon; they tell you, that were it to be raiſed in any one place, the ſuperior gravity of that part not being balanced, muſt depreſs it, till it meets a counterpoiſe; and that the ſame cauſe which redreſſes

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the inequality when it happens, muſt for ever prevent it, without ſome violent external operation *.

Can one imagine, that it had ever been poſſible, by any laws, or even by any art or induſtry, to have kept all the money in SPAIN, which the galleons have brought from the INDIES? or that all commodities could be ſold in FRANCE for a tenth of the price which they would yield on the other ſide of the PYRENEES, without finding their way thither, and draining from that immenſe treaſure? What other reaſon, indeed, is there, why all nations, at preſent, gain in their trade with SPAIN and PORTUGAL; but becauſe it is impoſſible to heap up money, more than any fluid, beyond its proper level? The ſovereigns of theſe countries have ſhown, that they wanted not inclination to keep their gold and ſilver to themſelves, had it been in any degree practicable.

But as any body of water may be raiſed above the level of the ſurrounding element, if the former has no communication with the latter; ſo in money, if the communication be cut off, by any material or phyſical impediment, (for all laws alone are ineffectual) there may, in ſuch a caſe, be a very great inequality of money. Thus the immenſe diſtance of CHINA, together with the monopolies of our INDIA companies, obſtructing the communication, preſerve in EUROPE the gold and ſilver, eſpecially the latter, in much greater plenty than they are found in that kingdom. But, notwithſtanding this great obſtruction, the force of the cauſes abovementioned is ſtill evident. The ſkill and ingenuity of EUROPE in general ſurpaſſes perhaps that of CHINA,

* There is another cauſe, though more limited in its operation, which checks the wrong balance of trade, to every particular nation to which the kingdom trades. When we import more goods than we export, the exchange turns againſt us, and this becomes a new encouragement to export; as much as the charge of carriage and inſurance of the money which becomes due would amount to. For the exchange can never riſe higher than that ſum.

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with regard to manual arts and manufactures; yet are we never able to trade thither without great disadvantage. And were it not for the continual recruits which we receive from AMERICA, money would very soon sink in EUROPE, and rise in CHINA, till it came nearly to a level in both places. Nor can any reasonable man doubt, but that industrious nation, were they as near us as POLAND or BARBARY, would drain us of the overplus of our specie, and draw to themselves a larger share of the WEST-INDIAN treasures. We need have no recourse to a physical attraction, to explain the necessity of this operation. There is a moral attraction, arising from the interests and passions of men, which is full as potent and infallible.

How is the balance kept in the provinces of every kingdom among themselves, but by the force of this principle, which makes it impossible for money to lose its level, and either to rise or sink beyond the proportion of the labour and commodities which is in each province? Did not long experience make people easy on this head, what a fund of gloomy reflections might calculations afford a melancholy YORKSHIREMAN, while he computed and magnified the sums drawn to LONDON by taxes, absentees, commodities, and found on comparison the opposite articles so much inferior? And no doubt, had the *Heptarchy* subsisted in ENGLAND, the legislature of each state had been continually alarmed by the fear of a wrong balance; and as 'tis probable that the mutual hatred of these states would have been extremely violent on account of their close neighbourhood, they would have loaded and oppressed all commerce, by a jealous and superfluous caution. Since the union has removed the barriers between SCOTLAND and ENGLAND, which of these nations gains from the other by this free commerce? Or if the former kingdom has received any increase of riches,

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can it be reasonably accounted for by any thing but the increase of its art and industry? It was a common apprehension in ENGLAND, before the union, as we learn from L'ABBE DU BOS *, that SCOTLAND would soon drain them of their treasure, were an open trade allowed; and on the other side the TWEED a contrary apprehension prevailed: With what justice in both, time has shown.

What happens in small portions of mankind, must take place in greater. The provinces of the ROMAN empire, no doubt, kept their balance with each other, and with ITALY, independent of the legislature; as much as the several counties of BRITAIN, or the several parishes of each county. And any man who travels over EUROPE at this day, may see by the prices of commodities, that money, in spite of the absurd jealousy of princes and states, has brought itself nearly to a level; and that the difference between one kingdom and another is not greater in this respect, than it is often between different provinces of the same kingdom. Men naturally flock to capital cities, sea-ports, and navigable rivers. There we find more men, more industry, more commodities, and consequently more money; but still the latter difference holds proportion with the former, and the level is preserved †.

Our

* *Les interets d'* ANGLETERRE *mal-entendus.*

† It must carefully be remarked, that throughout this discourse, wherever I speak of the level of money, I mean always its proportional level to the commodities, labour, industry, and skill, which is in the several states. And I assert, that where these advantages are double, triple, quadruple, to what they are in the neighbouring states, the money infallibly will also be double, triple, quadruple. The only circumstance that can obstruct the exactness of these proportions, is the expence of transporting the commodities from one place to another; and this expence is sometimes unequal. Thus the corn, cattle, cheese, butter, of DERBYSHIRE, cannot draw the money of LONDON, so much as the manufactures of LONDON draw the money of DERBY-

Our jealouſy and our hatred of FRANCE, are without bounds; and the former ſentiment, at leaſt, muſt be acknowledged very reaſonable and well-grounded. Theſe paſſions have occaſioned innumerable barriers and obſtructions upon commerce, where we are accuſed of being commonly the aggreſſors. But what have we gained by the bargain? We loſt the FRENCH market for our woollen manufactures, and transferred the commerce of wine to SPAIN and PORTUGAL, where we buy much worſe liquor at a higher price. There are few ENGLISHMEN who would not think their country abſolutely ruined, were FRENCH wines ſold in ENGLAND ſo cheap and in ſuch abundance as to ſupplant, in ſome meaſure, all ale, and home-brewed liquors: But would we lay aſide prejudice, it would not be difficult to prove, that nothing could be more innocent, perhaps advantageous. Each new acre of vineyard planted in FRANCE, in order to ſupply ENGLAND with wine, would make it requiſite for the FRENCH to take the produce of an ENGLISH acre, ſown in wheat or barley, in order to ſubſiſt themſelves; and 'tis evident, that we have thereby got command of the better commodity.

There are many edicts of the FRENCH King, prohibiting the planting of new vineyards, and ordering all thoſe already planted to be grubbed up: So ſenſible are they in that country, of the ſuperior value of corn, above every other product.

Mareſchal VAUBAN complains often, and with reaſon, of the abſurd duties which load the entry of thoſe wines of LANGUEDOC, GUIENNE, and other ſouthern provinces, that are imported into BRITANY and NORMANDY. He entertained no doubt but theſe latter provinces

DERBYSHIRE. But this objection is only a ſeeming one: For ſo far as the tranſport of commodities is expenſive, ſo far is the communication between the place obſtructed and imperfect.

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could preſerve their balance, notwithſtanding the open commerce which he recommends. And 'tis evident, that a few leagues more navigation to ENGLAND would make no difference; or if it did, that it muſt operate alike on the commodities of both kingdoms.

There is indeed one expedient by which it is poſſible to ſink, and another by which we may raiſe, money beyond its natural level in any kingdom; but theſe caſes, when examined, will be found to reſolve into our general theory, and to bring additional authority to it.

I ſcarce know any method of ſinking money below its level, but thoſe inſtitutions of banks, funds, and paper-credit, which are ſo much practiſed in this kingdom. Theſe render paper equivalent to money, circulate it thro' the whole ſtate, make it ſupply the place of gold and ſilver, raiſe proportionably the price of labour and commodities, and by that means either baniſh a great part of thoſe precious metals, or prevent their farther increaſe. What can be more ſhort-ſighted than our reaſonings on this head? We fancy, becauſe an individual would be much richer, were his ſtock of money doubled, that the ſame good effect would follow were the money of every one increaſed; not conſidering, that this would raiſe as much the price of every commodity, and reduce every man, in time, to the ſame condition as before. 'Tis only in our public negotiations and tranſactions with foreigners, that a greater ſtock of money is advantageous; and as our paper is there abſolutely inſignificant, we feel, by its means, all the ill effects ariſing from a great abundance of money, without reaping any of the advantages *.

Suppoſe

* We obſerved in Eſſay III. that money, when increaſing, gives encouragement to induſtry, during the interval between the increaſe of money and riſe of the prices. A good effect of this nature may follow too from paper credit;

Suppoſe that there are 12 millions of paper, which circulate in the kingdom as money, (for we are not to imagine, that all our enormous funds are employed in that ſhape) and ſuppoſe the real caſh of the kingdom to be 18 millions: Here is a ſtate which is found by experience able to hold a ſtock of 30 millions. I ſay, if it be able to hold it, it muſt of neceſſity have acquired it in gold and ſilver, had we not obſtructed the entrance of theſe metals by this new invention of paper. *Whence would it have acquired that ſum?* From all the kingdoms of the world. *But why?* Becauſe, if you remove theſe 12 millions, money in this ſtate is below its level, compared with our neighbours; and we muſt immediately draw from all of them, till we be full and ſaturate, ſo to ſpeak, and can hold no more. By our preſent politics, we are careful to ſtuff the nation with this fine commodity of bank-bills and chequer notes, as if we were afraid of being over-burthened with the precious metals.

'Tis not to be doubted, but the great plenty of bullion in FRANCE is, in a great meaſure, owing to the want of paper-credit. The FRENCH have no banks: Merchants bills do not there circulate as with us: Uſury or lending on intereſt is not directly permitted; ſo that many have large ſums in their coffers: Great quantities of plate are uſed in private houſes; and all the churches are full of it. By this means, proviſions and labour ſtill remain much cheaper among them, than in nations that are not half ſo rich in gold and ſilver. The advantages of this ſituation in point of trade, as well as in great public emergencies, are too evident to be diſputed.

The ſame faſhion a few years ago prevailed in GENOA, which ſtill has place in ENGLAND and HOLLAND,

credit; but 'tis dangerous to precipitate matters, at the riſk of loſing all by the failing of that credit, as muſt happen upon any violent ſhock in public affairs.

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of using ſervices of CHINA ware inſtead of plate; but the ſenate, wiſely foreſeeing the conſequence, prohibited the uſe of that brittle commodity beyond a certain extent; while the uſe of ſilver plate was left unlimited. And I ſuppoſe, in their late diſtreſſes, they felt the good effect of this ordinance. Our tax on plate is, perhaps, in this view, ſomewhat impolitic.

Before the introduction of paper-money into our colonies, they had gold and ſilver ſufficient for their circulation. Since the introduction of that commodity, the leaſt inconveniency that has followed is the total baniſhment of the precious metals. And after the abolition of paper, can it be doubted but money will return, while theſe colonies poſſeſs manufactures and commodities, the only thing valuable in commerce, and for whoſe ſake alone all men deſire money?

What pity LYCURGUS did not think of paper-credit, when he wanted to baniſh gold and ſilver from SPARTA! It would have ſerved his purpoſe better than the lumps of iron he made uſe of as money; and would alſo have prevented more effectually all commerce with ſtrangers, as being of ſo much leſs real and intrinſic value.

It muſt, however, be confeſſed, that, as all theſe queſtions of trade and money are extremely complicated, there are certain lights, in which this ſubject may be placed, ſo as to repreſent the advantages of paper-credit and banks to be ſuperior to their diſadvantages. That they baniſh ſpecie and bullion from a ſtate is undoubtedly true; and whoever looks no farther than this circumſtance does well to condemn them, but ſpecie and bullion are not of ſo great conſequence as not to admit of a compenſation, and even an overbalance from the increaſe of induſtry and of credit, which may be promoted by the right uſe of paper-money. It is well known of what advantage it is to a merchant to be able to diſcount his bills upon

upon occaſion; and every thing that facilitates this ſpecies of traffic is favourable to the general commerce of a ſtate. But private bankers are enabled to give ſuch credit by the credit they receive from the depoſiting of money in their ſhops; and the bank of ENGLAND in the ſame manner, from the liberty they have to iſſue their notes in all payments. There was an invention of this kind, which was fallen upon ſome years ago by the banks of EDINBURGH; and which, as it is one of the moſt ingenious ideas that has been executed in commerce, has alſo been found very advantageous to SCOTLAND. It is there called a BANK-CREDIT; and is of this nature. A man goes to the bank and finds ſurety to the amount, we ſhall ſuppoſe, of five thouſand pounds. This money, or any part of it, he has the liberty of drawing out whenever he pleaſes, and he pays only the ordinary intereſt for it, while it is in his hands. He may, when he pleaſes, repay any ſum ſo ſmall as twenty pounds, and the intereſt is diſcounted from the very day of the repayment. The advantages, reſulting from this contrivance, are manifold. As a man may find ſurety nearly to the amount of his ſubſtance, and his bank-credit is equivalent to ready money, a merchant does hereby in a manner coin his houſes, his houſehold furniture, the goods in his warehouſe, the foreign debts due to him, his ſhips at ſea; and can, upon occaſion, employ them in all payments, as if they were the current money of the country. If a man borrows five thouſand pounds from a private hand, beſides that it is not always to be found when required, he pays intereſt for it, whether he be uſing it or not: His bank-credit coſts him nothing except during the very moment in which it is of ſervice to him: And this circumſtance is of equal advantage as if he had borrowed money at much lower intereſt. Merchants, likewiſe, from this invention, acquire a great facility in ſupporting each other's credit, which is a conſiderable

derable ſecurity againſt bankruptcies. A man, when his own bank-credit is exhauſted, goes to any of his neighbours who is not in the ſame condition; and he gets the money, which he replaces at his convenience.

After this practice had taken place during ſome years at EDINBURGH, ſeveral companies of merchants at GLASGOW carried the matter farther. They aſſociated themſelves into different banks, and iſſued notes ſo low as ten ſhillings, which they uſed in all payments for goods, manufactures, tradeſmen, labour of all kinds; and theſe notes, from the eſtabliſhed credit of the companies, paſſed as money in all payments throughout the country. By this means, a ſtock of five thouſand pounds was able to perform the ſame operations as if it were ten; and merchants were thereby enabled to trade to a greater extent, and to require leſs profit in all their tranſactions. In NEWCASTLE and BRISTOL, as well as other trading places, the merchants have ſince inſtituted banks of a like nature, in imitation of thoſe in GLASGOW. But whatever other advantages reſult from theſe inventions, it muſt ſtill be allowed that they baniſh the precious metals; and nothing can be a more evident proof of it, than a compariſon of the paſt and preſent condition of SCOTLAND in that particular. It was found, upon the recoinage made after the union, that there was near a million of ſpecie in that country: But notwithſtanding the great increaſe of riches, commerce and manufactures of all kinds, it is thought, that, even where there is no extraordinary drain made by ENGLAND, the current ſpecie will not now amount to a fifth of that ſum.

But as our projects of paper-credit are almoſt the only expedient by which we can ſink money below its level; ſo, in my opinion, the only expedient by which we can raiſe money above its level, is a practice which we ſhould all exclaim againſt as deſtructive, *viz.* the gathering large

ſums into a public treaſure, locking them up, and abſolutely preventing their circulation. The fluid not communicating with the neighbouring element, may, by ſuch an artifice, be raiſed to what height we pleaſe. To prove this, we need only return to our firſt ſuppoſition, of the annihilating the half or any part of our caſh; where we found, that the immediate conſequence of ſuch an event would be the attraction of an equal ſum from all the neighbouring kingdoms. Nor does there ſeem to be any neceſſary bounds ſet, by the nature of things, to this practice of hoarding. A ſmall city, like GENEVA, continuing this policy for ages, might ingroſs nine tenths of the money of EUROPE. There ſeems, indeed, in the nature of man, an invincible obſtacle to that immenſe growth of riches. A weak ſtate, with an enormous treaſure, will ſoon become a prey to ſome of its poorer, but more powerful neighbours. A great ſtate would diſſipate its wealth in dangerous and ill-concerted projects; and probably deſtroy, with it, what is much more valuable, the induſtry, morals, and numbers of its people. The fluid, in this caſe, raiſed to too great a height, burſts and deſtroys the veſſel that contains it; and mixing itſelf with the ſurrounding element, ſoon falls to its proper level.

So little are we commonly acquainted with this principle, that though all hiſtorians agree in relating uniformly ſo recent an event, as the immenſe treaſure amaſſed by HARRY VII. (which they make amount to 1,700,000 pounds,) we rather reject their concurring teſtimony, than admit of a fact which agrees ſo ill with our inveterate prejudices. 'Tis indeed probable, that that ſum might be three fourths of all the money in ENGLAND. But where is the difficulty that ſuch a ſum might be amaſſed in twenty years, by a cunning, rapacious, frugal, and almoſt abſolute monarch? Nor is it

probable,

probable, that the diminution of circulating money was ever ſenſibly felt by the people, or ever did them any prejudice. The ſinking of the prices of all commodities would immediately replace it, by giving ENGLAND the advantage in its commerce with all the neighbouring kingdoms.

Have we not an inſtance in the ſmall republic of ATHENS with its allies, who in about fifty years between the MEDIAN and PELOPONNESIAN wars, amaſſed a ſum greater than that of HARRY VII. * ? For all the GREEK hiſtorians † and orators ‡ agree, that the ATHENIANS collected in the citadel more than 10,000 talents, which they afterwards diſſipated to their own ruin, in raſh and imprudent enterprizes. But when this money was ſet a-running, and began to communicate with the ſurrounding fluid; what was the conſequence? Did it remain in the ſtate? No. For we find by the memorable *cenſus* mentioned by DEMOSTHENES ‖ and POLYBIUS ⸸, that, in about fifty years afterwards, the whole value of the republic, comprehending lands, houſes, commodities, ſlaves, and money, was leſs than 6000 talents.

What an ambitious high-ſpirited people was this, to collect and keep in their treaſury, with a view to conqueſts, a ſum, which it was every day in the power of the citizens, by a ſingle vote, to diſtribute among themſelves, and which would go near to triple the riches of every individual! For we muſt obſerve, that the numbers and private riches of the ATHENIANS are ſaid by ancient writers to have been no greater at the beginning

* There were about eight ounces of ſilver in a pound *Sterling* in HARRY VII.'s time.

† THUCYDIDES, lib. 2. and DIOD. SIC. lib. 12.

‡ *Vid.* ÆSCHINIS *et* DEMOSTHENIS *Epiſt.*

‖ Περὶ Συμμοριας. ⸸ Lib. 2. cap. 62.

of the PELOPONNESIAN war, than at the beginning of the MACEDONIAN.

Money was little more plentiful in GREECE during the age of PHILIP and PERSEUS, than in ENGLAND during that of HARRY VII.: Yet these two monarchs in thirty years * collected from the small kingdom of MACEDON, a much larger treasure than that of the ENGLISH monarch. PAULUS ÆMILIUS brought to ROME about 1,700,000 pounds *Serling* †. PLINY says, 2,400,000 ‡. And that was but a part of the MACEDONIAN treasure. The rest was dissipated by the resistance and flight of PERSEUS ‖.

We may learn from STANYAN, that the canton of BERNE had 300,000 pounds lent at interest, and had above six times as much in their treasury. Here then is a sum hoarded of 1,800,000 pounds *Sterling*, which is at least quadruple of what should naturally circulate in such a petty state; and yet no one who travels into the PAIS DE VAUX, or any part of that canton, observes any want of money more than could be supposed in a country of that extent, soil, and situation. On the contrary, there are scarce any inland provinces in the continent of FRANCE or GERMANY, where the inhabitants are at this time so opulent, though that canton has vastly increased its treasure since 1714, the time when STANYAN wrote his judicious account of SWITZERLAND †.

The account given by APPIAN § of the treasure of the PTOLOMIES, is so prodigious, that one cannot admit of it;

* TITI LIVII, lib. 45. cap. 40. † VEL. PATERC. lib. 1. cap. 6.
‡ Lib. 33. cap. 3. ‖ TITI LIVII, *ibid.*

† The poverty which STANYAN speaks of is only to be seen in the most mountainous cantons, where there is no commodity to bring money: And even there the people are not poorer than in the diocese of SALTSBURG on the one hand, or SAVOY on the other.

§ *Prom.*

and

and ſo much the leſs, becauſe the hiſtorian ſays, the other ſucceſſors of ALEXANDER were alſo frugal, and had many of them treaſures not much inferior. For this ſaving humour of the neighbouring princes muſt neceſſarily have checked the frugality of the EGYPTIAN monarchs, according to the foregoing theory. The ſum he mentions is 740,000 talents, or 191,166,666 pounds 13 ſhillings and 4 pence, according to Dr. ARBUTHNOT's computation. And yet APPIAN ſays, that he extracted his account from the public records; and he was himſelf a native of ALEXANDRIA.

From theſe principles we may learn what judgment we ought to form of thoſe numberleſs bars, obſtructions, and impoſts, which all nations of EUROPE, and none more than ENGLAND, have put upon trade; from an exorbitant deſire of amaſſing money, which never will heap up beyond its level, while it circulates; or from an ill grounded apprehenſion of loſing their ſpecie, which never will ſink below it. Could any thing ſcatter our riches, it would be ſuch impolitic contrivances. But this general ill effect, however, reſults from them, that they deprive neighbouring nations of that free communication and exchange, which the Author of the world has intended, by giving them ſoils, climates, and geniuſes, ſo different from each other.

Our modern politics embrace the only method of baniſhing money, the uſing paper-credit; they reject the only method of amaſſing it, the practice of hoarding; and they adopt a hundred contrivances, which ſerve to no purpoſe but to check induſtry, and rob ourſelves and our neighbours of the common benefits of art and nature.

All taxes, however, upon foreign commodities, are not to be regarded as prejudicial or uſeleſs, but thoſe on-

ly which are founded on the jealouſy above-mentioned. A tax on GERMAN linen encourages home manufactures, and thereby multiplies our people and induſtry. A tax on brandy increaſes the ſale of rum, and ſupports our ſouthern colonies. And as 'tis neceſſary impoſts ſhould be levied, for the ſupport of government, it may be thought more convenient to lay them on foreign commodities, which can eaſily be intercepted at the port, and ſubjected to the impoſt. We ought, however, always to remember the maxim of Dr. SWIFT, That, in the arithmetic of the cuſtoms, two and two make not four, but often make only one. It can ſcarcely be doubted, but if the duties on wine were lowered to a third, they would yield much more to the government than at preſent: Our people might thereby afford to drink commonly a better and more wholeſome liquor; and no prejudice would enſue to the balance of trade, of which we are ſo jealous. The manufacture of ale beyond the agriculture, is but inconſiderable, and gives employment to few hands. The tranſport of wine and corn would not be much inferior.

But are there not frequent inſtances, you will ſay, of ſtates and kingdoms, which were formerly rich and opulent, and are now poor and beggarly? Has not the money left them, with which they formerly abounded? I anſwer, If they loſe their trade, induſtry and people, they cannot expect to keep their gold and ſilver: For theſe precious metals will hold proportion to the former advantages. When LISBON and AMSTERDAM got the EAST-INDIA trade from VENICE and GENOA, they alſo got the profits and money which aroſe from it. Where the ſeat of government is transferred, where expenſive armies are maintained at a diſtance, where great funds are poſſeſſed by foreigners; there naturally follows from theſe cauſes a diminution of the ſpecie. But theſe, we

may

may obſerve, are violent and forcible methods of carrying away money, and are in time commonly attended with the tranſport of people and induſtry. But where theſe remain, and the drain is not continued, the money always finds its way back again, by a hundred canals, of which we have no notion or ſuſpicion. What immenſe treaſures have been ſpent, by ſo many nations, in FLANDERS ſince the revolution, in the courſe of three long wars? More money perhaps than the half of what is at preſent in all EUROPE. But what has now become of it? Is it in the narrow compaſs of the AUSTRIAN provinces? No, ſurely: It has moſt of it returned to the ſeveral countries whence it came, and has followed that art and induſtry by which at firſt it was acquired. Far above a thouſand years, the money of EUROPE has been flowing to ROME, by an open and ſenſible current; but it has been emptied by many ſecret and inſenſible canals: And the want of induſtry and commerce renders at preſent the papal dominions the pooreſt territories in all ITALY.

In ſhort, a government has great reaſon to preſerve with care its people and its manufactures. Its money, it may ſafely truſt to the courſe of human affairs, without fear or jealouſy. Or if it ever give attention to this latter circumſtance, it ought only to be ſo far as it affects the former.

ESSAY VI.

Of the JEALOUSY of TRADE.

HAVING endeavoured to remove one ſpecies of ill-founded jealouſy, which is ſo prevalent among commercial nations, it may not be amiſs to mention another, which ſeems equally groundleſs. Nothing is more uſual, among ſtates which have made ſome advances in commerce, than to look on the progreſs of their neighbours with a ſuſpicious eye, to conſider all trading ſtates as their rivals, and to ſuppoſe that it is impoſſible for any of them to flouriſh, but at their expence. In oppoſition to this narrow and malignant opinion, I will venture to aſſert, that the increaſe of riches and commerce in any one nation, inſtead of hurting, commonly promotes the riches and commerce of all its neighbours; and that a ſtate can ſcarcely carry its trade and induſtry very far, where all the ſurrounding ſtates are buried in ignorance, ſloth, and barbariſm.

It is obvious, that the domeſtic induſtry of a people cannot be hurt by the greateſt proſperity of their neighbours; and as this branch of commerce is undoubtedly the moſt important in any extenſive kingdom, we are ſo far removed from all reaſon of jealouſy. But I go farther, and obſerve, that where an open communication is preſerved among nations, it is impoſſible but the domeſtic induſtry of every one muſt receive an increaſe from the im-

improvements of the others. Compare the ſituation of GREAT BRITAIN at preſent, with what it was two centuries ago. All the arts both of agriculture and manufactures were then extremely rude and imperfect. Every improvement which we have ſince made, has ariſen from our imitation of foreigners; and we ought ſo far to eſteem it happy, that they had previouſly made advances in arts and ingenuity. But this intercourſe is ſtill upheld to our great advantage: Notwithſtanding the advanced ſtate of our manufactures, we daily adopt in every art, the inventions and improvements of our neighbours. The commodity is firſt imported from abroad, to our great diſcontent, while we imagine that it drains us of our money: Afterwards, the art itſelf is gradually imported, to our viſible advantage: Yet we continue ſtill to repine, that our neighbours ſhould poſſeſs any art, induſtry, and invention; forgetting that had they not firſt inſtructed us, we ſhould have been at preſent barbarians; and did they not ſtill continue their inſtructions, the arts muſt fall into a ſtate of languor, and loſe that emulation and novelty which contribute ſo much to their advancement.

The increaſe of domeſtic induſtry lays the foundation of foreign commerce. Where a great number of commodities are raiſed and perfected for the home-market, there will always be found ſome which can be exported with advantage. But if our neighbours have no art nor cultivation, they cannot take them; becauſe they will have nothing to give in exchange. In this reſpect, ſtates are in the ſame condition as individuals. A ſingle man can ſcarce be induſtrious, where all his fellow-citizens are idle. The riches of the ſeveral members of a community contribute to increaſe my riches, whatever profeſſion I may follow. They conſume the produce of my induſtry, and afford me the produce of theirs in return.

Nor

Nor need any ſtate entertain apprehenſions, that their neighbours will improve to ſuch a degree in every art and manufacture, as to have no demand from them. Nature, by giving a diverſity of geniuſes, climates, and ſoils to different nations, has ſecured their mutual intercourſe and commerce, as long as they all remain induſtrious and civilized. Nay, the more the arts increaſe in any ſtate, the more will be its demands from its induſtrious neighbours. The inhabitants, having become opulent and ſkilful, deſire to have every commodity in the utmoſt perfection; and as they have plenty of commodities to give in exchange, they make large importations from every foreign country. The induſtry of the nations from whom they import, receives encouragement: Their own is alſo increaſed, by the ſale of the commodities which they give in exchange.

But what if a nation has any ſtaple commodity, ſuch as the woollen manufacture is to ENGLAND? Muſt not the interfering of their neighbours in that manufacture be a loſs to them? I anſwer, that when any commodity is denominated the ſtaple of a kingdom, it is ſuppoſed that that kingdom has ſome peculiar and natural advantages for raiſing the commodity; and if, notwithſtanding theſe advantages, they loſe ſuch a manufactory, they ought to blame their own idleneſs, or bad government, not the induſtry of their neighbours. It ought alſo to be conſidered, that by the increaſe of induſtry among the neighbouring nations, the conſumption of every particular ſpecies of commodity is alſo increaſed; and though foreign manufactures interfere with us in the market, the demand for our product may ſtill continue, or even increaſe. And even ſhould it diminiſh, ought the conſequence to be eſteemed ſo fatal? If the ſpirit of induſtry be preſerved, it may eaſily be diverted from one branch to another; and the manufacturers of wool, for inſtance,

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be employed in linen, ſilk, iron, or any other commodities, for which there appears to be a demand. We need not apprehend, that all the objects of induſtry will be exhauſted, or that our manufacturers, while they remain on an equal footing with thoſe of our neighbours, will be in danger of wanting employment. The emulation among rival nations ſerves rather to keep induſtry alive in all of them: And any people is happier who poſſeſs a variety of manufactures, than if they enjoyed one ſingle great manufacture, in which they are all employed. Their ſituation is leſs precarious, and they will feel leſs ſenſibly thoſe revolutions and uncertainties to which every particular branch of commerce will always be expoſed.

The only commercial ſtate which ought to dread the improvements and induſtry of their neighbours, is ſuch a one as HOLLAND, which enjoying no extent of land, nor poſſeſſing any native commodity, flouriſhes only by being the brokers, and factors, and carriers of others. Such a people may naturally apprehend, that as ſoon as the neighbouring ſtates come to know and purſue their intereſt, they will take into their own hands the management of their affairs, and deprive their brokers of that profit, which they formerly reaped from it. But though this conſequence may naturally be dreaded, it is very long before it takes place; and by art and induſtry it may be warded off for many generations, if not wholly eluded. The advantage of ſuperior ſtocks and correſpondence is ſo great, that it is not eaſily overcome; and as all the tranſactions increaſe by the increaſe of induſtry in the neighbouring ſtates, even a people whoſe commerce ſtands on this precarious baſis, may at firſt reap a conſiderable profit from the flouriſhing condition of their neighbours. The DUTCH, having mortgaged all their revenues, make not ſuch a figure in political tranſactions as formerly; but

their commerce is ſurely equal to what it was in the middle of the laſt century, when they were reckoned among the great powers of EUROPE.

Were our narrow and malignant politics to meet with ſucceſs, we ſhould reduce all our neighbouring nations to the ſame ſtate of ſloth and ignorance that prevails in MOROCCO and the coaſt of BARBARY. But what would be the conſequence? They could ſend us no commodities: They could take none from us: Our domeſtic commerce itſelf would languiſh for want of emulation, example, and inſtruction: And we ourſelves ſhould ſoon fall into the ſame abject condition to which we had reduced them. I ſhall therefore venture to acknowledge, that not only as a man, but as a BRITISH ſubject, I pray for the flouriſhing commerce of GERMANY, SPAIN, ITALY, and even FRANCE itſelf. I am at leaſt certain, that GREAT BRITAIN, and all theſe nations, would flouriſh more, did their ſovereigns and miniſters adopt ſuch enlarged and benevolent ſentiments towards each other.

ESSAY

ESSAY VII.

Of the BALANCE of POWER.

IT is a queſtion, whether the *idea* of the balance of power be owing intirely to modern policy, or whether the *phraſe* only has been invented in theſe latter ages? 'Tis certain, that XENOPHON †, in his inſtitution of CYRUS, repreſents the combination of the ASIATIC powers to have ariſen from a jealouſy of the increaſing force of the MEDES and PERSIANS; and tho' that elegant compoſition ſhould be ſuppoſed altogether a romance, this ſentiment, aſcribed by the author to the eaſtern princes, is at leaſt a proof of the prevailing notions of antient times.

In all the politics of Greece, the anxiety with regard to the balance of power, is moſt apparent, and is expreſly pointed out to us, even by the antient hiſtorians. THUCYDIDES ‡ repreſents the league which was formed againſt ATHENS, and which produced the PELOPONNESIAN war, as intirely owing to this principle. And after the decline of ATHENS, when the THEBANS and LACEDEMONIANS diſputed for ſovereignty, we find, that the ATHENIANS (as well as many other republics) threw themſelves always into the lighter ſcale, and endeavoured to preſerve the balance. They ſupported THEBES againſt SPARTA, till the great victory gained by EPAMINONDAS

† Lib. 1. ‡ Lib. 1.

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at LEUCTRA; after which they immediately went over to the conquered, from generosity, as they pretended, but, in reality, from their jealousy of the conquerors †.

Whoever will read DEMOSTHENES's oration for the MEGALOPOLITANS, may see the utmost refinements on this principle, which ever entered into the head of a VENETIAN or ENGLISH speculatist. And upon the first rise of the MACEDONIAN power, this orator immediately discovered the danger, sounded the alarm thro' all GREECE, and at last assembled that confederacy under the banners of ATHENS, which fought the great and decisive battle of CHAERONEA.

'Tis true, the GRECIAN wars are regarded by historians as wars of emulation rather than of politics; and each state seems to have had more in view the honour of leading the rest, than any well-grounded hopes of authority and dominion. If we consider, indeed, the small number of inhabitants in any one republic, compared to the whole, the great difficulty of forming sieges in those times, and the extraordinary bravery and discipline of every freeman among that noble people; we shall conclude, that the balance of power was of itself, sufficiently secured in GREECE, and needed not to be guarded with that caution which may be requisite in other ages. But whether we ascribe the shifting sides in all the GRECIAN republics to *jealous emulation* or *cautious politics*, the effects were alike, and every prevailing power was sure to meet with a confederacy against it, and that often composed of its former friends and allies.

The same principle, call it envy or prudence, which produced the *Ostracism* of ATHENS, and *Petalism* of SYRACUSE, and expelled every citizen whose fame or power overtopped the rest; the same principle, I say,

† XENOPH. Hist. GRAEC. lib. 6. & 7.

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naturally discovered itself in foreign politics, and soon raised enemies to the leading state, however moderate in the exercise of its authority.

The PERSIAN monarch was really, in his force, a petty prince, compared to the GRECIAN republics; and therefore it behoved him, from views of safety more than from emulation, to interest himself in their quarrels, and to support the weaker side in every contest. This was the advice given by ALCIBIADES to TISSAPHERNES *, and it prolonged near a century the date of the PERSIAN empire; till the neglect of it for a moment, after the first appearance of the aspiring genius of PHILIP, brought that lofty and frail edifice to the ground, with a rapidity of which there are few instances in the history of mankind.

The successors of ALEXANDER showed an infinite jealousy of the balance of power; a jealousy founded on true politics and prudence, and which preserved distinct for several ages the partitions made after the death of that famous conqueror. The fortune and ambition of ANTIGONUS † threatened them anew with an universal monarchy; but their combination, and their victory at IPSUS saved them. And in after times, we find, that as the Eastern princes considered the GREEKS and MACEDONIANS as the only real military force with whom they had any intercourse, they kept always a watchful eye over that part of the world. The PTOLEMIES, in particular, supported first ARATUS and the ACHAEANS, and then CLEOMENES king of SPARTA, from no other view than as a counterbalance to the MACEDONIAN monarchs. For this is the account which POLYBIUS gives of the EGYPTIAN politics ‡.

The reason why 'tis supposed, that the ancients were entirely ignorant of the *balance of power*, seems to be

* THUCYD. lib. 8. † DIOD. SIC. lib. 20. ‡ Lib. 2. cap. 51.

drawn from the ROMAN history more than the GRECIAN; and as the transactions of the former are generally the most familiar to us, we have thence formed all our conclusions. It must be owned, that the ROMANS never met with any such general combination or confederacy against them, as might naturally be expected from their rapid conquests and declared ambition; but were allowed peaceably to subdue their neighbours, one after another, till they extended their dominion over the whole known world. Not to mention the fabulous history of their ITALIC wars; there was, upon HANNIBAL's invasion of the ROMAN state, a very remarkable crisis, which ought to have called up the attention of all civilized nations. It appeared afterwards (nor was it difficult to be observed at the time) † that this was a contest for universal empire; and yet no prince or state seems to have been in the least alarmed about the event or issue of the quarrel. PHILIP of MACEDON remained neuter, till he saw the victories of HANNIBAL; and then most imprudently formed an alliance with the conqueror, upon terms still more imprudent. He stipulated, that he was to assist the CARTHAGINIAN state in their conquest of ITALY; after which they engaged to send over forces into GREECE, to assist him in subduing the GRECIAN commonwealths ‡.

The RHODIAN and ACHAEAN republics are much celebrated by antient historians for their wisdom and sound policy; yet both of them assisted the ROMANS in their wars against PHILIP and ANTIOCHUS. And what may be esteemed still a stronger proof, that this maxim was not familiarly known in those ages; no ancient au-

† It was observed by some, as appears by the speech of AGELAUS of NAUPACTUS, in the general congress of GREECE. See POLYB. lib. 5. cap. 104.

‡ TITI LIVII lib. 23. cap. 33.

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thor has ever remarked the imprudence of these measures, nor has even blamed that absurd treaty above mentioned, made by PHILIP with the CARTHAGINIANS. Princes and statesmen may in all ages be blinded in their reasonings with regard to events, beforehand: But 'tis somewhat extraordinary, that historians, afterwards, should not form a sounder judgment of them.

MASSINISSA, ATTALUS, PRUSIAS, in satisfying their private passions, were, all of them, the instruments of the ROMAN greatness; and never seem to have suspected, that they were forging their own chains, while they advanced the conquests of their ally. A simple treaty and agreement between MASSINISSA and the CARTHAGINIANS, so much required by mutual interest, barred the ROMANS from all entrance into AFRICA, and preserved liberty to mankind.

The only prince we meet with in the ROMAN history, who seems to have understood the balance of power, is HIERO king of SYRACUSE. Tho' the ally of ROME, he sent assistance to the CARTHAGINIANS, during the war of the auxiliaries: "Esteeming it requisite," says POLYBIUS †, "both in order to retain his dominions "in SICILY, and to preserve the ROMAN friendship, "that CARTHAGE should be safe; lest by its fall the "remaining power should be able, without contrast or "opposition, to execute every purpose and undertaking. "And here he acted with great wisdom and prudence. "For that is never, on any account, to be overlooked; "nor ought such a force ever to be thrown into one "hand, as to incapacitate the neighbouring states from "defending their rights against it." Here is the aim of modern politics pointed out in express terms.

In short, the maxim of preserving the balance of power is founded so much on common sense and obvious

† Lib. 2. cap. 83.

reaſoning, that 'tis impoſſible it could altogether have eſcaped antiquity, where we find, in other particulars, ſo many marks of deep penetration and diſcernment. If it was not ſo generally known and acknowledged as at preſent, it had, at leaſt, an influence on all the wiſer and more experienced princes and politicians. And indeed, even at preſent, however generally known and acknowledged among ſpeculative reaſoners, it has not, in practice, an authority much more extenſive among thoſe who govern the world.

After the fall of the ROMAN empire, the form of government eſtabliſhed by the northern conquerors, incapacitated them, in a great meaſure, from farther conqueſts, and long maintained each ſtate in its proper boundaries. But when vaſſalage and the feudal militia were aboliſhed, mankind were anew alarmed by the danger of univerſal monarchy, from the union of ſo many kingdoms and principalities in the perſon of the emperor CHARLES. But the power of the houſe of AUSTRIA, founded on extenſive but divided dominions, and their riches, derived chiefly from mines of gold and ſilver, were more likely to decay, of themſelves, from internal defects, than to overthrow all the bulwarks raiſed againſt them. In leſs than a century, the force of that violent and haughty race was ſhattered, their opulence diſſipated, their ſplendour eclipſed. A new power ſucceeded, more formidable to the liberties of EUROPE, poſſeſſing all the advantages of the former, and labouring under none of its defects; except a ſhare of that ſpirit of bigotry and perſecution, with which the houſe of AUSTRIA were ſo long, and ſtill are ſo much infatuated.

EUROPE has now, for above a century, remained on the defenſive againſt the greateſt force that ever, perhaps, was formed by the civil or political combination of mankind. And ſuch is the influence of the maxim here treated

treated of, that tho' that ambitious nation, in the five laſt general wars, have been victorious in four †, and unſucceſsful only in one ‡, they have not much enlarged their dominions, nor acquired a total aſcendant over EUROPE. There remains rather room to hope, that, by maintaining the reſiſtance ſome time, the natural revolutions of human affairs, together with unforeſeen events and accidents, may guard us againſt univerſal monarchy, and preſerve the world from ſo great an evil.

In the three laſt of theſe general wars, BRITAIN has ſtood foremoſt in the glorious ſtruggle; and ſhe ſtill maintains her ſtation, as guardian of the general liberties of EUROPE, and patron of mankind. Beſide her advantages of riches and ſituation, her people are animated with ſuch a national ſpirit, and are ſo fully ſenſible of the ineſtimable bleſſings of their government, that we may hope their vigour never will languiſh in ſo neceſſary and ſo juſt a cauſe. On the contrary, if we may judge by the paſt, their paſſionate ardour ſeems rather to require ſome moderation; and they have oftener erred from a laudable exceſs than from a blameable deficiency.

In the *firſt* place, we ſeem to have been more poſſeſſed with the antient GREEK ſpirit of jealous emulation, than actuated with the prudent views of modern politics. Our wars with FRANCE have been begun with juſtice, and even, perhaps from neceſſity; but have always been too far puſhed from obſtinacy and paſſion. The ſame peace which was afterwards made at RYSWICK in 1697, was offered ſo early as the ninety-two; that concluded at UTRECHT in 1712 might have been finiſhed on as good conditions at GERTRUYTENBERG in the eight; and we might have given at FRANCFORT, in 1723, the

† Thoſe concluded by the peace of the PYRENEES, NIMEGUEN, RYSWICK, and AIX-LA-CHAPELLE.

‡ That concluded by the peace of UTRECHT.

ſame terms, which we were glad to accept of at AIX-LA-CHAPELLE in the forty-eight. Here then we ſee, that above half of our wars with FRANCE, and all our public debts, are owing more to our own imprudent vehemence, than to the ambition of our neighbours.

In the *ſecond* place, we are ſo declared in our oppoſition to FRENCH power, and ſo alert in defence of our allies, that they always reckon upon our force as upon their own; and expecting to carry on war at our expence, refuſe all reaſonable terms of accommodation. *Habent ſubjectos, tanquam ſuos; viles, ut alienos.* All the world knows, that the factious vote of the Houſe of Commons, in the beginning of the laſt parliament, with the profeſſed humour of the nation, made the queen of HUNGARY inflexible in her terms, and prevented that agreement with PRUSSIA, which would immediately have reſtored the general tranquillity of EUROPE.

In the *third* place, we are ſuch true combatants, that, when once engaged, we loſe all concern for ourſelves and our poſterity, and conſider only how we may beſt annoy the enemy. To mortgage our revenues at ſo deep a rate, in wars, where we were only acceſſories, was ſurely the moſt fatal deluſion, that a nation, who had any pretenſion to politics and prudence, has ever yet been guilty of. That remedy of funding, if it be a remedy, and not rather a poiſon, ought, in all reaſon, to be reſerved to the laſt extremity; and no evil, but the greateſt and moſt urgent, ſhould ever induce us to embrace ſo dangerous an expedient.

Theſe exceſſes, to which we have been carried, are prejudicial; and may, perhaps, in time, become ſtill more prejudicial another way, by begetting, as is uſual, the oppoſite extreme, and rendering us totally careleſs and ſupine with regard to the fate of EUROPE. The ATHENIANS, from the moſt buſtling, intriguing, warlike people

people of GREECE, finding their error in thruſting themſelves into every quarrel, abandoned all attention to foreign affairs; and in no conteſt ever took party on either ſide, except by their flatteries and complaiſance to the victor.

Enormous monarchies, ſuch as EUROPE at preſent is threatened with, are, probably, deſtructive to human nature; in their progreſs, in their continuance †, and even in their downfal, which never can be very diſtant from their eſtabliſhment. The military genius which aggrandized the monarchy, ſoon leaves the court, the capital, and the center of ſuch a government; while the wars are carried on at a great diſtance, and intereſt ſo ſmall a part of the ſtate. The antient nobility, whoſe affections attach them to their ſovereign, live all at court; and never will accept of military employments, which would carry them to remote and barbarous frontiers, where they are diſtant both from their pleaſures and their fortune. The arms of the ſtate muſt, therefore, be truſted to mercenary ſtrangers, without zeal, without attachment, without honour; ready on every occaſion to turn them againſt the prince, and join each deſperate malecontent, who offers pay and plunder. This is the neceſſary progreſs of human affairs: Thus human nature checks itſelf in its airy elevations: Thus ambition blindly labours for the deſtruction of the conqueror, of his family, and of every thing near and dear to him. The BOURBONS, truſting to the ſupport of their brave, faithful, and affectionate nobility, would puſh their advantage, without reſerve or limitation. Theſe, while fired with glory and emulation, can bear the fatigues and dangers of war; but never would ſubmit to languiſh in

† If the ROMAN empire was of advantage, it could only proceed from this, that mankind were generally in a very diſorderly, uncivilized condition, before its eſtabliſhment.

the garrisons of HUNGARY or LITHUANIA, forgot at court, and sacrificed to the intrigues of every minion or mistress, who approaches the prince. The troops are filled with CRAVATES and TARTARS, HUSSARS and COSSACS; intermingled, perhaps, with a few soldiers of fortune from the better provinces: And the melancholy fate of the ROMAN emperors, from the same cause, is renewed over and over again, till the final dissolution of the monarchy.

ESSAY

ESSAY VIII.

Of TAXES.

THERE is a maxim, that prevails among thoſe whom in this country we call *ways and means men*, and who are denominated *Financiers* and *Maltotiers* in FRANCE, *That every new tax creates a new ability in the ſubject to bear it, and that each increaſe of public burdens increaſes proportionably the induſtry of the people.* This maxim is of ſuch a nature as is moſt likely to be extremely abuſed; and is ſo much the more dangerous, as its truth cannot be altogether denied; but it muſt be owned, when kept within certain bounds, to have ſome foundation in reaſon and experience.

When a tax is laid upon commodities, which are conſumed by the common people, the neceſſary conſequence may ſeem to be, that either the poor muſt retrench ſomething from their way of living, or raiſe their wages, ſo as to make the burden of the tax fall intirely upon the rich. But there is a third conſequence, which very often follows upon taxes, *viz.* that the poor increaſe their induſtry, perform more work, and live as well as before, without demanding more for their labour. Where taxes are moderate, are laid on gradually, and affect not the neceſſaries of life, this conſequence naturally follows; and 'tis certain, that ſuch difficulties often ſerve to excite the induſtry of a people, and render them more opulent

lent and laborious, than others, who enjoy the greateſt advantages. For we may obſerve, as a parallel inſtance, that the moſt commercial nations have not always poſſeſſed the greateſt extent of fertile land; but, on the contrary, that they have laboured under many natural diſadvantages. TYRE, ATHENS, CARTHAGE, RHODES, GENOA, VENICE, HOLLAND, are ſtrong examples to this purpoſe. And in all hiſtory, we find only three inſtances of large and fertile countries, which have poſſeſſed much trade; the NETHERLANDS, ENGLAND, and FRANCE. The two former ſeem to have been allured by the advantages of their maritime ſituation and the neceſſity they lay under of frequenting foreign ports, in order to procure what their own climate refuſed them. And as to FRANCE, trade has come very late into that kingdom, and ſeems to have been the effect of reflection and obſervation in an ingenious and enterpriſing people, who remarked the immenſe riches acquired by ſuch of the neighbouring nations as cultivated navigation and commerce.

The places mentioned by CICERO *, as poſſeſſed of the greateſt commerce in his time, are ALEXANDRIA, COLCHOS, TYRE, SIDON, ANDROS, CYPRUS, PAMPHYLIA, LYCIA, RHODES, CHIOS, BYZANTIUM, LESBOS, SMYRNA, MILETUM, COOS. All theſe, except ALEXANDRIA, were either ſmall iſlands, or narrow territories. And that city owed its trade intirely to the happineſs of its ſituation.

Since therefore ſome natural neceſſities or diſadvantages may be thought favourable to induſtry, why may not artificial burdens have the ſame effect? Sir WILLIAM TEMPLE †, we may obſerve, aſcribes the induſtry of the DUTCH intirely to neceſſity, proceeding from their na-

* Epiſt. ad ATT. lib. 9. ep. 11.

† Account of the NETHERLANDS, Chap. 6.

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tural diſadvantages; and illuſtrates his doctrine by a very ſtriking compariſon with IRELAND; "where," ſays he, "by the largeneſs and plenty of the ſoil, and ſcarcity of "people, all things neceſſary to life are ſo cheap, that "an induſtrious man, by two days labour, may gain "enough to feed him the reſt of the week. Which I "take to be a very plain ground of the lazineſs attri-"buted to the people. For men naturally prefer eaſe "before labour, and will not take pains if they can live "idle; tho' when, by neceſſity, they have been inured "to it, they cannot leave it, being grown a cuſtom ne-"ceſſary to their health, and to their very entertainment. "Nor perhaps is the change harder, from conſtant eaſe "to labour, than from conſtant labour to eaſe." After which the author proceeds to confirm his doctrine, by enumerating, as above, the places where trade has moſt flouriſhed, in antient and modern times; and which are commonly obſerved to be ſuch narrow confined territories, as beget a neceſſity for induſtry.

'Tis always obſerved, in years of ſcarcity, if it be not extreme, that the poor labour more, and really live better, than in years of great plenty, when they indulge themſelves in idleneſs and riot. I have been told, by a conſiderable manufacturer, that in the year 1740, when bread and proviſions of all kinds were very dear, his workmen not only made a ſhift to live, but paid debts, which they had contracted in former years, that were much more favourable and abundant †.

This doctrine, therefore, with regard to taxes, may be admitted in ſome degree: But beware of the abuſe. Exorbitant taxes, like extreme neceſſity, deſtroy induſtry, by producing deſpair; and even before they reach this pitch, they raiſe the wages of the labourer and manufacturer, and heighten the price of all commodities. An

† To this purpoſe ſee alſo Eſſay I. at the end.

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attentive disinterested legislature, will observe the point when the emolument ceases, and the prejudice begins: But as the contrary character is much more common, 'tis to be feared that taxes, all over EUROPE, are multiplying to such a degree, as will intirely crush all art and industry; tho', perhaps, their first increase, together with other circumstances, might have contributed to the growth of these advantages.

The best taxes are such as are levied upon consumptions, especially those of luxury; because such taxes are less felt by the people. They seem, in some measure, voluntary; since a man may chuse how far he will use the commodity which is taxed: They are paid gradually and insensibly: And being confounded with the natural price of the commodity, they are scarcely perceived by the consumers. Their only disadvantage is, that they are expensive in the levying.

Taxes upon possessions are levied without expence; but have every other disadvantage. Most states, however, are obliged to have recourse to them, in order to supply the deficiencies of the other.

But the most pernicious of all taxes are those which are arbitrary. They are commonly converted, by their management, into punishments on industry; and also, by their unavoidable inequality, are more grievous than by the real burden which they impose. 'Tis surprising, therefore, to see them have place among any civilized people.

In general, all poll-taxes, even when not arbitrary, which they commonly are, may be esteemed dangerous: Because it is so easy for the sovereign to add a little more, and a little more, to the sum demanded, that these taxes are apt to become altogether oppressive and intolerable. On the other hand, a duty upon commodities checks itself;

itſelf; and a prince will ſoon find, that an increaſe of the impoſt is no increaſe of his revenue. It is not eaſy, therefore, for a people to be altogether ruined by ſuch taxes.

Hiſtorians inform us, that one of the chief cauſes of the deſtruction of the ROMAN ſtate, was the alteration which CONSTANTINE introduced into the finances, by ſubſtituting an univerſal poll-tax, in lieu of almoſt all the tithes, cuſtoms, and exciſes, which formerly compoſed the revenue of the *empire*. The people, in all the provinces, were ſo grinded and oppreſſed by the *publicans*, that they were glad to take refuge under the conquering arms of the barbarians; whoſe dominion, as they had fewer neceſſities and leſs art, was found preferable to the refined tyranny of the ROMANS.

There is a prevailing opinion, that all taxes, however levied, fall upon the land at laſt. Such an opinion may be uſeful in BRITAIN, by checking the landed gentlemen, in whoſe hands our legiſlature is chiefly lodged, and making them preſerve great regard for trade and induſtry. But I muſt confeſs, that this principle, tho' firſt advanced by a celebrated writer, has ſo little appearance of reaſon, that, were it not for his authority, it had never been received by any body. Every man, to be ſure, is deſirous of puſhing off from himſelf the burden of any tax, which is impoſed, and laying it upon others: But as every man has the ſame inclination, and is upon the defenſive; no ſet of men can be ſuppoſed to prevail altogether in this conteſt. And why the landed gentleman ſhould be the victim of the whole, and ſhould not be able to defend himſelf, as well as others are, I cannot readily imagine. All tradeſmen, indeed, would willingly prey upon him, and divide him among them, if they could: But this inclination they always have, tho' no taxes were levied; and the ſame methods, by which he guards againſt the

the impoſition of tradeſmen before taxes, will ſerve him afterwards, and make them ſhare the burden with him.

I ſhall conclude this ſubject with obſerving, that we have, with regard to taxes, an inſtance of what frequently happens in political inſtitutions, that the conſequences of things are diametrically oppoſite to what we ſhould expect on the firſt appearance. 'Tis regarded as a fundamental maxim of the TURKISH government, That the *Grand Signior*, tho' abſolute maſter of the lives and fortunes of each individual, has no authority to impoſe a new tax; and every OTTOMAN prince, who has made ſuch an attempt, either has been obliged to retract, or has found the fatal effects of his perſeverance. One would imagine, that this prejudice or eſtabliſhed opinion were the firmeſt barrier in the world againſt oppreſſion; yet 'tis certain, that its effect is quite contrary. The emperor, having no regular method of increaſing his revenue, muſt allow all the baſhaws and governors to oppreſs and abuſe the ſubjects: And theſe he ſqueezes after their return from their government. Whereas, if he could impoſe a new tax, like our EUROPEAN princes, his intereſt would ſo far be united with that of his people, that he would immediately feel the bad effects of theſe diſorderly levies of money, and would find, that a pound, raiſed by general impoſition, would have leſs pernicious effects, than a ſhilling taken in ſo unequal and arbitrary a manner.

ESSAY

ESSAY IX.

Of PUBLIC CREDIT.

IT appears to have been the common practice of antiquity, to make provision, in times of peace, for the necessities of war, and to hoard up treasures beforehand, as the instruments either of conquest or defence; without trusting to extraordinary imposts, much less to borrowing, in times of disorder and confusion. Besides the immense sums above mentioned †, which were amassed by ATHENS, and by the PTOLEMIES, and other successors of ALEXANDER; we learn from PLATO ‡, that the frugal LACEDEMONIANS had also collected a great treasure; and ARRIAN § and PLUTARCH ‖ specify the riches which ALEXANDER got possession of on the conquest of SUSA and ECBATANA, and which were reserved, some of them, from the time of CYRUS. If I remember right, the scripture also mentions the treasure of HEZEKIAH and the JEWISH princes; as profane history does that of PHILIP and PERSEUS, kings of MACEDON. The ancient republics of GAUL had commonly large sums in reserve ⸸. Every one knows the treasure seized in ROME by JULIUS CÆSAR, during the

† Essay V. ‡ ALCIB. 1. § Lib. 3.

‖ PLUT. *in vita* ALEX. He makes these treasures amount to 80,000 talents, or about 15 millions sterl. QUINTUS CURTIUS (Lib. 5. Cap. 2.) says, that ALEXANDER found in SUSA above 50,000 talents.

⸸ STRABO, Lib. 4.

civil

civil wars; and we find afterwards, that the wiſer emperors, AUGUSTUS, TIBERIUS, VESPASIAN, SEVERUS, &c. always diſcovered the prudent foreſight, of ſaving great ſums againſt any public exigency.

On the contrary, our modern expedient, which has become very general, is to mortgage the public revenues, and to truſt that poſterity, during peace, will pay off the incumbrances contracted during the preceding war: And they, having before their eyes, ſo good an example of their wiſe fathers, have the ſame prudent reliance on their poſterity; who, at laſt, from neceſſity more than choice, are obliged to place the ſame confidence in a new poſterity. But not to waſte time in declaiming againſt a practice which appears ruinous, beyond the evidence of an hundred demonſtrations; it ſeems pretty apparent, that the antient maxims are, in this reſpect, much more prudent than the modern; even though the latter had been confined within ſome reaſonable bounds, and had ever, in any inſtance, been attended with ſuch frugality, in time of peace, as to diſcharge the debts incurred by an expenſive war. For why ſhould the caſe be ſo very different between the public and an individual, as to make us eſtabliſh ſuch different maxims of conduct for each? If the funds of the former be greater, its neceſſary expences are proportionably larger; if its reſources be more numerous, they are not infinite; and as its frame ſhould be calculated for a much longer duration, than the date of a ſingle life, or even of a family, it ſhould embrace maxims, large, durable, and generous, agreeable to the ſuppoſed extent of its exiſtence. To truſt to chances and temporary expedients, is, indeed, what the neceſſity of human affairs frequently reduces us to; but whoever voluntarily depend on ſuch reſources, have not neceſſity, but their own folly, to accuſe for their misfortunes, when any ſuch befal them.

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If the abuſes of treaſures be dangerous, either by engaging the ſtate in raſh enterprizes, or making it neglect military diſcipline, in confidence of its riches; the abuſes of mortgaging are more certain and inevitable; poverty, impotence, and ſubjection to foreign powers.

According to modern policy, war is attended with every deſtructive circumſtance; loſs of men, increaſe of taxes, decay of commerce, diſſipation of money, devaſtation by ſea and land. According to ancient maxims, the opening of the public treaſure, as it produced an uncommon affluence of gold and ſilver, ſerved as a temporary encouragement to induſtry, and attoned, in ſome degree, for the inevitable calamities of war.

What then ſhall we ſay to the new paradox, That public incumbrances are, of themſelves, advantageous, independent of the neceſſity of contracting them; and that any ſtate, even though it were not preſſed by a foreign enemy, could not poſſibly have embraced a wiſer expedient for promoting commerce and riches, than to create funds, and debts, and taxes, without limitation? Diſcourſes, ſuch as theſe, might naturally have paſſed for trials of wit among rhetoricians, like the panegyrics on folly and a fever, on Busiris and Nero, had we not ſeen ſuch abſurd maxims patronized by great miniſters, and by a whole party among us. And theſe puzzling arguments, (for they deſerve not the name of ſpecious) though they could not be the foundation of Lord Orford's conduct, for he had more ſenſe; ſerved at leaſt to keep his partizans in countenance, and perplex the underſtanding of the nation.

Let us examine the conſequences of public debts, both in our domeſtic management, by their influence on commerce and induſtry; and in our foreign tranſactions, by their effect on wars and negotiations.

There is a word, which is here in the mouth of every body, and which, I find, has alſo got abroad, and is much employed by foreign writers †, in imitation of the ENGLISH; and this is, CIRCULATION. This word ſerves as an account of every thing; and though I confeſs, that I have ſought for its meaning in the preſent ſubject, ever ſince I was a ſchool-boy, I have never yet been able to diſcover it. What poſſible advantage is there which the nation can reap by the eaſy transference of ſtock from hand to hand? Or is there any parallel to be drawn from the circulation of other commodities, to that of chequer-notes and INDIA bonds? Where a manufacturer has a quick ſale of his goods to the merchant, the merchant to the ſhopkeeper, the ſhopkeeper to his cuſtomers; this enlivens induſtry, and gives new encouragement to the firſt dealer or the manufacturer and all his tradeſmen, and makes them produce more and better commodities of the ſame ſpecies. A ſtagnation is here pernicious, wherever it happens; becauſe it operates backwards, and ſtops or benumbs the induſtrious hand in its production of what is uſeful to human life. But what production we owe to CHANGE-ALLEY, or even what conſumption, except that of coffee, and pen, ink, and paper, I have not yet learned; nor can one foreſee the loſs or decay of any one beneficial commerce or commodity, though that place and all its inhabitants were for ever buried in the ocean.

But though this term has never been explained by thoſe who inſiſt ſo much on the advantages that reſult from a circulation, there ſeems, however, to be ſome benefit of a ſimilar kind, ariſing from our incumbrances: As indeed, what human evil is there, which is not attended with ſome advantage? This we ſhall endeavour to

† MELON, DU TOT, LAW, in the pamphlets publiſhed in FRANCE.

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explain, that we may eſtimate the weight which we ought to allow it.

Public ſecurities are with us become a kind of money, and paſs as readily at the current price as gold or ſilver. Wherever any profitable undertaking offers itſelf, however expenſive, there are never wanting hands enough to embrace it; nor need a trader, who has ſums in the public ſtocks, fear to launch out into the moſt extenſive trade; ſince he is poſſeſſed of funds, which will anſwer the moſt ſudden demand that can be made upon him. No merchant thinks it neceſſary to keep by him any conſiderable caſh. Bank-ſtock, or India-bonds, eſpecially the latter, ſerve all the ſame purpoſes; becauſe he can diſpoſe of them, or pledge them to a banker, in a quarter of an hour; and at the ſame time they are not idle, even when in his ſcritoire, but bring him in a conſtant revenue. In ſhort, our national debts furniſh merchants with a ſpecies of money, that is continually multiplying in their hands, and produces ſure gain, beſides the profits of their commerce. This muſt enable them to trade upon leſs profit. The ſmall profit of the merchant renders the commodity cheaper, cauſes a greater conſumption, quickens the labour of the common people, and helps to ſpread arts and induſtry through the whole ſociety.

There are alſo, we may obſerve, in ENGLAND, and in all ſtates, which have both commerce and public debts, a ſet of men, who are half-merchants, half ſtock-holders, and may be ſuppoſed willing to trade for ſmall profits; becauſe commerce is not their principal or ſole ſupport, and their revenues in the funds are a ſure reſource for themſelves and their families. Were there no funds, great merchants would have no expedient for realizing or ſecuring any part of their profit, but by making purchaſes of land; and land has many diſadvantages in com-

pariſon of funds. Requiring more care and inſpection, it divides the time and attention of the merchant; upon any tempting offer or extraordinary accident in trade, it is not ſo eaſily converted into money; and as it attracts too much, both by the many natural pleaſures it affords, and the authority it gives, it ſoon converts the citizen into the country gentleman. More men, therefore, with large ſtocks and incomes, may naturally be ſuppoſed to continue in trade, where there are public debts: and this, it muſt be owned, is of ſome advantage to commerce, by diminiſhing its profits, promoting circulation, and encouraging induſtry †.

But, in oppoſition to theſe two favourable circumſtances, perhaps of no very great importance, weigh the many diſadvantages which attend our public debts, in the whole *interior* œconomy of the ſtate: You will find no compariſon between the ill and the good which reſult from them.

Firſt, 'Tis certain, that national debts cauſe a mighty confluence of people and riches to the capital, by the great ſums which are levied in the provinces to pay the intereſt of thoſe debts; and perhaps, too, by the advantages in trade above mentioned, which they give the merchants in the capital above the reſt of the kingdom. The queſtion is, Whether, in our caſe, it be for the public intereſt, that ſo many privileges ſhould be conferred on LONDON, which has already arrived at ſuch an enormous ſize, and ſeems ſtill increaſing? Some men are apprehenſive of the conſequences. For my part, I cannot forbear thinking, that tho' the head is undoubt-

† On this head, I ſhall obſerve, without interrupting the thread of the argument, that the multiplicity of our public debts ſerves rather to ſink the intereſt, and that the more the government borrows, the cheaper may they expect to borrow; contrary to firſt appearance, and contrary to common opinion. The profits of trade have an influence on intereſt. See Eſſay IV.

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edly too big for the body, yet that great city is so happily situated, that its excessive bulk causes less inconvenience than even a smaller capital to a greater kingdom. There is more difference between the prices of all provisions in PARIS and LANGUEDOC, than between those in LONDON and YORKSHIRE.

Secondly, Public stocks, being a kind of paper-credit, have all the disadvantages attending that species of money. They banish gold and silver from the most considerable commerce of the state, reduce them to common circulation, and by that means render all provisions and labour dearer than otherwise they would be.

Thirdly, The taxes which are levied to pay the interests of these debts, are apt to be a check upon industry, to heighten the price of labour, and to be an oppression on the poorer sort.

Fourthly, As foreigners possess a share of our national funds, they render the public, in a manner, tributary to them, and may in time occasion the transport of our people and our industry.

Fifthly, The greatest part of public stock being always in the hands of idle people, who live on their revenue, our funds give great encouragement to an useless and inactive life.

But tho' the injury which arises to commerce and industry from our public funds, will appear, upon balancing the whole, very considerable, it is trivial, in comparison of the prejudice which results to the state considered as a body politic, which must support itself in the society of nations, and have various transactions with other states, in wars and negotiations. The ill, there, is pure and unmixed, without any favourable circumstance to atone for it: and 'tis an ill too of a nature the highest and most important.

We have, indeed, been told, that the public is no weaker upon account of its debts; ſince they are moſtly due among ourſelves, and bring as much property to one as they take from another. 'Tis like transferring money from the right hand to the left; which leaves the perſon neither richer nor poorer than before. Such looſe reaſonings and ſpecious compariſons will always paſs, where we judge not upon principles. I aſk, Is it poſſible, in the nature of things, to overburthen a nation with taxes, even where the ſovereign reſides among them? The very doubt ſeems extravagant; ſince 'tis requiſite in every commonwealth, that there be a certain proportion obſerved between the laborious and the idle part of it. But if all our preſent taxes be mortgaged, muſt we not invent new ones? And may not this matter be carried to a length that is ruinous and deſtructive?

In every nation, there are always ſome methods of levying money more eaſy than others, agreeable to the way of living of the people, and the commodities they make uſe of. In BRITAIN, the exciſes upon malt and beer afford a very large revenue; becauſe the operations of malting and brewing are very tedious, and are impoſſible to be concealed; and at the ſame time, theſe commodities are not ſo abſolutely neceſſary to life, as that the raiſing their price would very much affect the poorer ſort. Theſe taxes being all mortgaged, what difficulty to find new ones! what vexation and ruin of the poor!

Duties upon conſumptions are more equal and eaſy than thoſe upon poſſeſſions. What a loſs to the public, that the former are all exhauſted, and that we muſt have recourſe to the more grievous method of levying taxes!

Were all the proprietors of land only ſtewards to the public, muſt not neceſſity force them to practiſe all the arts of oppreſſion uſed by ſtewards, where the abſence or

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negligence of the proprietor render them ſecure againſt enquiry?

It will ſcarce be aſſerted, that no bounds ought ever to be ſet to national debts; and that the public would be no weaker, were twelve or fifteen ſhillings in the pound, land-tax, mortgaged, with all the preſent cuſtoms and exciſes. There is ſomething therefore in the caſe, beſide the mere transferring of property from one hand to another. In 500 years, the poſterity of thoſe now in the coaches, and of thoſe upon the boxes, will probably have changed places, without affecting the public by theſe revolutions.

Suppoſe the public once fairly brought to that condition, to which it is haſtening with ſuch amazing rapidity; ſuppoſe the land to be taxed eighteen or nineteen ſhillings in the pound; for it can never bear the whole twenty: ſuppoſe all the exciſes and cuſtoms to be ſcrewed up to the outmoſt which the nation can bear, without entirely loſing its commerce and induſtry; and ſuppoſe that all thoſe funds are mortgaged to perpetuity, and that the invention and wit of all our projectors can find no new impoſition which may ſerve as the foundation of a new loan; and let us conſider the neceſſary conſequences of this ſituation. Tho' the imperfect ſtate of our political knowlege, and the narrow capacities of men make it difficult to foretel the effects which will reſult from any untried meaſure, the ſeeds of ruin are here ſcattered with ſuch profuſion as not to eſcape the eye of the moſt careleſs obſerver.

In this unnatural ſtate of ſociety, the only perſons who poſſeſs any revenue, beyond the immediate effects of their induſtry, are the ſtock-holders, who draw almoſt all the rent of the land and houſes, beſides the produce of all the cuſtoms and exciſes. Theſe are men, who have no connexions in the ſtate, who can enjoy their revenue in any

part of the world in which they chooſe to reſide, who will naturally bury themſelves in the capital, or in great cities, and who will ſink into the lethargy of a ſtupid and pampered luxury, without ſpirit, ambition, or enjoyment. Adieu to all ideas of nobility, gentry, and family. The ſtocks can be transferred in an inſtant, and being in ſuch a fluctuating ſtate, will ſeldom be tranſmitted during three generations from father to ſon. Or were they to remain ever ſo long in one family, they convey no hereditary authority or credit to the poſſeſſors; and by this means, the ſeveral ranks of men, which form a kind of independant magiſtracy in a ſtate, inſtituted by the hand of nature, are entirely loſt; and every man in authority derives his influence from the commiſſion alone of the ſovereign. No expedient remains for preventing or ſuppreſſing inſurrections, but mercenary armies: No expedient at all remains for reſiſting tyranny: Elections are ſwayed by bribery and corruption alone: And the middle power between king and people being totally removed, a horrible deſpotiſm muſt infallibly prevail. The land-holders, deſpiſed for their poverty, and hated for their oppreſſions, will be utterly unable to make any oppoſition to it.

Tho' a reſolution ſhould be formed by the legiſlature never to impoſe any tax which hurts commerce and diſcourages induſtry, it will be impoſſible for men, in ſubjects of ſuch extreme delicacy, to reaſon ſo juſtly as never to be miſtaken, or amidſt difficulties ſo urgent, never to be ſeduced from their reſolution. The continual fluctuations in commerce require continual alterations in the nature of the taxes; which expoſes the legiſlature every moment to the danger both of wilful and involuntary error. And any great blow given to trade, whether by injudicious taxes or by other accidents, throws the whole ſyſtem of the government into confuſion.

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But what expedient is the public now to fall upon, even ſuppoſing trade to continue in the moſt flouriſhing condition, to ſupport its foreign wars and enterprizes, and to defend its own honour and intereſts or thoſe of its allies? I do not aſk how the public is to exert ſuch a prodigious power as it has maintained during our late wars; where we have ſo much exceeded, not only our own natural ſtrength, but even that of the greateſt empires. This extravagance is the abuſe complained of, as the ſource of all the dangers to which we are at preſent expoſed. But ſince we muſt ſtill ſuppoſe great commerce and opulence to remain, even after every fund is mortgaged; thoſe riches muſt be defended by proportionable power, and whence is the public to derive the revenue which ſupports it? It muſt plainly be from a continual taxation of the annuitants, or which is the ſame thing, from mortgaging anew, on every exigency, a certain part of their annuity; and thus making them contribute to their own defence, and to that of the nation. But the difficulties, attending this ſyſtem of policy, will eaſily appear, whether we ſuppoſe the king to have become abſolute maſter, or to be ſtill controuled by national councils, in which the annuitants themſelves muſt neceſſarily bear the principal ſway.

If the prince has become abſolute, as may naturally be expected from this ſituation of affairs, it is ſo eaſy for him to encreaſe his exactions upon the annuitants, which amount only to the retaining money in his own hands, that this ſpecies of property would ſoon loſe all its credit, and the whole income of every individual in the ſtate muſt lie entirely at the mercy of the ſovereign: A degree of deſpotiſm which no oriental monarchy has ever yet attained. If, on the contrary, the conſent of the annuitants be requiſite for every taxation, they will never be perſuaded to contribute ſufficiently even to the ſupport of government; as the diminution of their revenue

venue muſt in that caſe be very ſenſible, would not be diſguiſed under the appearance of a branch of exciſe or cuſtoms, and would not be ſhared by any other order of the ſtate, who are already ſuppoſed to be taxed to the utmoſt. There are inſtances, in ſome republics, of a hundredth penny, and ſometimes of the fiftieth, being given to the ſupport of the ſtate; but this is always an extraordinary exertion of power, and can never become the foundation of a conſtant national defence. We have always found, where a government has mortgaged all its revenues, that it neceſſarily ſinks into a ſtate of languor, inactivity and impotence.

Such are the inconveniences, which may reaſonably be foreſeen, of this ſituation, to which GREAT BRITAIN is viſibly tending. Not to mention, the numberleſs inconveniences, which cannot be foreſeen, and which muſt reſult from ſo monſtrous a ſituation as that of making the public the ſole proprietor of land, beſides inveſting it with every branch of cuſtoms and exciſe, which the fertile imagination of miniſters and projectors have been able to invent.

I muſt confeſs, that there is a ſtrange ſupineneſs, from long cuſtom, crept into all ranks of men, with regard to public debts, not unlike what divines ſo vehemently complain of with regard to their religious doctrines. We all own, that the moſt ſanguine imagination cannot hope, either that this or any future miniſtry will be poſſeſſed of ſuch rigid and ſteady frugality, as to make any conſiderable progreſs in the payment of our debts; or that the ſituation of foreign affairs will, for any long time, allow them leiſure and tranquillity for ſuch an undertaking.†. *What then is to become of us?* Were we ever ſo

† In times of peace and ſecurity, when alone it is poſſible to pay debt, the monied intereſt are averſe to receive partial payments, which they know not how to diſpoſe of to advantage; and the landed intereſt are averſe to continue

ſo good Chriſtians, and ever ſo reſigned to Providence; this, methinks, were a curious queſtion, even conſidered as a ſpeculative one, and what it might not be altogether impoſſible to form ſome conjectural ſolution of. The events here will depend little upon the contingencies of battles, negotiations, intrigues and factions. There ſeems to be a natural progreſs of things, which may guide our reaſoning. As it would have required but a moderate ſhare of prudence, when we firſt began this practice of mortgaging, to have foretold, from the nature of men and of miniſters, that things would neceſſarily be carried to the length we ſee; ſo now, that they have at laſt happily reached it, it may not be difficult to gueſs at the conſequences. It muſt, indeed, be one of theſe two events; either the nation muſt deſtroy public credit, or public credit will deſtroy the nation. 'Tis impoſſible they can both ſubſiſt, after the manner they have been hitherto managed, in this, as well as in ſome other nations.

There was, indeed, a ſcheme for the payment of our debts, which was propoſed by an excellent citizen, Mr. Hutchinson, above thirty years ago, and which was much approved of by ſome men of ſenſe, but never was likely to take effect. He aſſerted, that there was a fallacy in imagining that the public owed this debt; for that really every individual owed a proportional ſhare of it, and paid, in his taxes, a proportional ſhare of the intereſt, beſide the expences of levying theſe taxes. Had we not better, then, ſays he, make a proportional diſtribution of the debt among us, and each of us contribute a ſum ſuitable to his property, and by that means

tinue the taxes requiſite for that purpoſe. Why therefore ſhould a miniſter perſevere in a meaſure ſo diſagreeable to all parties? For the ſake, I ſuppoſe, of a poſterity, which he will never ſee, or of a few reaſonable reflecting people, whoſe united intereſt, perhaps, will not be able to ſecure him the ſmalleſt burrough in England. 'Tis not likely we ſhall ever find any miniſter ſo bad a politician. With regard to theſe narrow deſtructive maxims of politics, all miniſters are expert enough.

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discharge at once all our funds and public mortgages? He seems not to have considered, that the laborious poor pay a considerable part of the taxes by their annual consumptions, tho' they could not advance, at once, a proportional part of the sum required. Not to mention, that property in money and stock in trade might easily be concealed or disguised; and that visible property in lands and houses would really at last answer for the whole: An inequality and oppression which never would be submitted to. But tho' this project is never likely to take place; 'tis not altogether improbable, that when the nation become heartily sick of their debts, and are cruelly oppressed by them, some daring projector may arise with visionary schemes for their discharge. And as public credit will begin, by that time, to be a little frail, the least touch will destroy it, as happened in FRANCE; and in this manner it will *die of the doctor* *:

But 'tis more probable, that the breach of national faith will be the necessary effect of wars, defeats, misfortunes, and public calamities, or even perhaps of victories and conquests. I must confess, when I see princes and states fighting and quarrelling, amidst their debts, funds, and public mortgages, it always brings to my mind a match of cudgel-playing fought in a *China* shop. How

* Some neighbouring states practise an easy expedient, by which they lighten their public debts. The FRENCH have a custom (as the Romans formerly had) of augmenting their money; and this the nation has been so much familiarized to, that it hurts not public credit, tho' it be really cutting off at once, by an edict, so much of their debts. The DUTCH diminish the interest, without the consent of their creditors; or, which is the same thing, they arbitrarily tax the funds as well as other property. Could we practise either of these methods, we need never be oppressed by the national debt; and 'tis not impossible but one of these, or some other method, may, at all adventures, be tried, on the augmentation of our incumbrances and difficulties. But people in this country are so good reasoners upon whatever regards their interest, that such a practice will deceive no body; and public credit will probably tumble at once by so dangerous a trial.

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can it be expected, that ſovereigns will ſpare a ſpecies of property, which is pernicious to themſelves and to the public, when they have ſo little compaſſion on lives and properties, which are uſeful to both? Let the time come (and ſurely it will come) when the new funds, created for the exigencies of the year, are not ſubſcribed to, and raiſe not the money projected. Suppoſe, either that the caſh of the nation is exhauſted; or that our faith, which has been hitherto ſo ample, begins to fail us. Suppoſe, that, in this diſtreſs, the nation is threatened with an invaſion; a rebellion is ſuſpected or broke out at home; a ſquadron cannot be equipped for want of pay, victuals, or repairs; or even a foreign ſubſidy cannot be advanced. What muſt a prince or miniſter do in ſuch an emergence? The right of ſelf-preſervation is unalienable in every individual, much more in every community. And the folly of our ſtateſmen muſt then be greater than the folly of thoſe who firſt contracted debt, or, what is more, than that of thoſe who truſted, or continue to truſt this ſecurity, if theſe ſtateſmen have the means of ſafety in their hands, and do not employ them. The funds, created and mortgaged, will, by that time, bring in a large yearly revenue, ſufficient for the defence and ſecurity of the nation: Money is perhaps lying in the exchequer, ready for the diſcharge of the quarterly intereſt: Neceſſity calls, fear urges, reaſon exhorts, compaſſion alone exclaims: The money will immediately be ſeized for the current ſervice, under the moſt ſolemn proteſtations, perhaps, of being immediately replaced. But no more is requiſite. The whole fabric, already tottering, falls to the ground, and buries thouſands in its ruins. And this, I think, may be called the *natural death* of public credit: For to this period it tends as naturally as an animal body to its diſſolution and deſtruction *.

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* So great dupes are the generality of mankind, that, notwithſtanding ſuch a violent ſtock to public credit, as a voluntary bankruptcy in England

Theſe two events, ſuppoſed above, are calamitous, but not the moſt calamitous. Thouſands are hereby ſacrificed to the ſafety of millions. But we are not without danger, that the contrary event may take place, and that millions may be ſacrificed for ever to the temporary ſafety of thouſands †. Our popular government, perhaps, will render it difficult or dangerous for a miniſter to

LAND would occaſion, it would not probably be long, ere credit would again revive in as flouriſhing a condition as before. The preſent king of FRANCE, during the late war, borrowed money at lower intereſt than ever his grandfather did; and as low as the BRITISH parliament, comparing the natural rate of intereſt in both kingdoms. And tho' men are commonly more governed by what they have ſeen, than by what thay foreſee, with whatever certainty; yet promiſes, proteſtations, fair appearances, with the allurements of preſent intereſt, have ſuch powerful influence as few are able to reſiſt. Mankind are, in all ages, caught by the ſame baits: The ſame tricks, played over and over again, ſtill trepan them. The heights of popularity and patriotiſm are ſtill the beaten road to power and tyranny; flattery to treachery; ſtanding armies to arbitrary government; and the glory of God to the temporal intereſt of the clergy. The fear of an everlaſting deſtruction of credit, allowing it to be an evil, is a needleſs bugbear. A prudent man, in reality, would rather lend to the public immediately after they had taken a ſpunge to their debts, as at preſent; as much as an opulent knave, even tho' one could not force him to pay, is a preferable debtor to an honeſt bankrupt: For the former, in order to carry on buſineſs, may find it his intereſt to diſcharge his debts, where they are not exorbitant: The latter has it not in his power. The reaſoning of TACITUS, *Hiſt. lib.* 3. as it is eternally true, is very applicable to our preſent caſe. *Sed vulgus ad magnitudinem beneficiorum aderat: Stultiſſimus quiſque pecuniis mercabatur: Apud ſapientes caſſa habebantur, quæ neque dari neque accipi, ſalva republica, poterant.* The public is a debtor, whom no man can oblige to pay. The only check which the creditors have on it, is the intereſt of preſerving credit; an intereſt, which may eaſily be overbalanced by a very great debt, and by a difficult and extraordinary emergence, even ſuppoſing that credit irrecoverable. Not to mention, that a preſent neceſſity often forces ſtates into meaſures which are, ſtrictly ſpeaking, againſt their intereſt

† I have heard it has been computed, that all the creditors of the public, natives and foreigners, amount only to 17,000. Theſe make a figure at preſent on their income; but, in caſe of a public bankruptcy, would, in an inſtant, become the loweſt, as well as the moſt wretched of the people. The dignity and authority of the landed gentry and nobility is much better rooted;

to venture on ſo deſperate an expedient, as that of a voluntary bankruptcy. And tho' the houſe of Lords be altogether compoſed of the proprietors of lands, and the houſe of Commons chiefly; and conſequently neither of them can be ſuppoſed to have great property in the funds: Yet the connections of the members may be ſo great with the proprietors, as to render them more tenacious of public faith, than prudence, policy, or even juſtice, ſtrictly ſpeaking, requires. And perhaps, too, our foreign enemies, or rather enemy (for we have but one to dread) may be ſo politic as to diſcover, that our ſafety lies in deſpair, and may not, therefore, ſhow the danger, open and barefaced, till it be inevitable. The balance of power in EUROPE, our grandfathers, our fathers, and we, have all juſtly eſteemed too unequal to be preſerved without our attention and aſſiſtance. But our children, weary with the ſtruggle, and fettered with incumbrances, may ſit down ſecure, and ſee their neighbours oppreſſed and conquered; till, at laſt, they themſelves and their creditors lie both at the mercy of the conqueror. And this may properly enough be denominated the *violent death* of our public credit.

Theſe ſeem to be the events which are not very remote, and which reaſon foreſees as clearly almoſt as ſhe can do any thing that lies in the womb of time. And tho' the antients maintained that, in order to reach the gift of prophecy, a certain divine fury or madneſs was

rooted; and would render the contention very unequal, if ever we come to that extremity. One would incline to aſſign to this event a very near period, ſuch as half a century, had not our fathers' prophecies of this kind been already found fallacious, by the duration of our public credit, ſo much beyond all reaſonable expectation. When the aſtrologers in FRANCE were every year foretelling the death of HENRY IV. *Theſe fellows*, ſays he, *muſt be right at laſt.* We ſhall, therefore, be more cautious than to aſſign any preciſe date; and ſhall content ourſelves with pointing out the event in general.

requiſite, one may ſafely affirm, that, in order to deliver ſuch prophecies as theſe, no more is neceſſary, than merely to be in one's ſenſes, free from the influence of popular madneſs and deluſion.

ESSAY X.

Of some Remarkable Customs.

I Shall obſerve three remarkable cuſtoms in three celebrated governments; and ſhall conclude from the whole, that all general maxims in politics ought to be eſtabliſhed with great reſerve; and that irregular and extraordinary appearances are frequently diſcovered in the moral, as well as in the phyſical world. The former, perhaps, we can better account for, after they happen, from ſprings and principles, of which every one has, within himſelf, or from obvious obſervation, the ſtrongeſt aſſurance and conviction: But 'tis often fully as impoſſible for human prudence, beforehand, to foreſee, and foretel them.

I. One would think it eſſential to every ſupreme council or aſſembly, which debates, that intire liberty of ſpeech ſhould be granted to every member, and that all motions or reaſonings ſhould be received, which can any way tend to illuſtrate the point under deliberation. One would conclude, with ſtill greater aſſurance, that, after a motion was made, which was voted and approved by that aſſembly in which the legiſlative power is lodged, the member who made the motion muſt for ever be exempted from farther trial or inquiry. But no political maxim can, at firſt ſight, appear more undiſputable, than that he muſt, at leaſt, be ſecured from all inferior juriſdiction; and that nothing leſs than the ſame ſupreme legiſlative

assembly, in their subsequent meetings, could render him accountable for those motions and harangues which they had before approved of. But these axioms, however irrefragable they may appear, have all failed in the ATHENIAN government, from causes and principles too, which appear almost inevitable.

By the γραφη παρανομων, or *indictment of illegality*, (tho' it has not been remarked by antiquaries or commentators) any man was tried and punished in a common court of judicature, for any law which had passed upon his motion, in the assembly of the people, if that law appeared to the court unjust, or prejudicial to the public. Thus DEMOSTHENES, finding that ship-money was levied irregularly, and that the poor bore the same burden as the rich in equipping the gallies, corrected this inequality by a very useful law, which proportioned the expence to the revenue and income of each individual. He moved for this law in the assembly; he proved its advantages *; he convinced the people, the only legislature in ATHENS; the law passed, and was carried into execution: And yet he was tried in a criminal court for that law, upon the complaint of the rich, who resented the alteration he had introduced into the finances †. He was indeed acquitted, upon proving anew the usefulness of his law.

CTESIPHON moved in the assembly of the people, that particular honours should be conferred on DEMOSTHENES, as on a citizen affectionate and useful to the commonwealth: The people, convinced of this truth, voted those honours: Yet was CTESIPHON tried by the γραφη παρανομων. It was asserted, among other topics, that DEMOSTHENES was not a good citizen, nor affectionate to the commonwealth: And the orator was called upon

* His harangue for it is still extant; περι Συμμοριων.

† Pro CTESIPHONTE.

to

to defend his friend, and consequently himself; which he executed by that sublime piece of eloquence, that has ever since been the admiration of mankind.

After the battle of Chæronea, a law was passed upon the motion of Hyperides, giving liberty to slaves, and inrolling them in the troops *. On account of this law, the orator was afterwards tried by the indictment above mentioned, and defended himself, among other topics, by that stroke celebrated by Plutarch and Longinus. *It was not I*, said he, *that moved for this law: It was the necessities of war; it was the battle of* Chæronea. The orations of Demosthenes abound with many instances of trials of this nature, and prove clearly, that nothing was more commonly practised.

The Athenian Democracy was such a tumultuary government, as we can scarce form a notion of in the present age of the world. The whole collective body of the people voted in every law, without any limitation of property, without any distinction of rank, without controul from any magistracy or senate †; and consequently without regard to order, justice, or prudence. The Athenians soon became sensible of the mischiefs attending this constitution: But being averse to the checking themselves by any rule or restriction, they resolved, at least, to check their demagogues or counsellors, by the fear of future punishment and inquiry. They accordingly instituted this remarkable law; a law esteemed so essential to their government, that Æschi-

* Plutarchus *in vitâ decem oratorum*. Demosthenes gives a different account of this law. *Contra* Aristogiton. *orat.* II. He says, That its purport was, to render the ατιμοι επιτιμοι, or to restore the privilege of bearing offices to those who had been declared incapable. Perhaps these were both clauses of the same law.

† The senate of the Bean was only a less numerous mob, chosen by lot from among the people; and their authority was not great.

NES inſiſts on it as a known truth, that were it aboliſhed or neglected, it were impoſſible for the Democracy to ſubſiſt *.

The people feared not any ill conſequence to liberty from the authority of the criminal courts; becauſe theſe were nothing but very numerous juries, choſen by lot from among the people. And they conſidered themſelves juſtly as in a ſtate of perpetual pupillage; where they had an authority, after they came to the uſe of reaſon, not only to retract and controul whatever had been determined, but to puniſh any guardian for meaſures which they had embraced by his perſuaſion. The ſame law had place in THEBES †; and for the ſame reaſon.

It appears to have been an uſual practice in ATHENS, on the eſtabliſhment of any law eſteemed very uſeful or popular, to prohibit for ever its abrogation and repeal. Thus the demagogue, who diverted all the public revenues to the ſupport of ſhows and ſpectacles, made it criminal ſo much as to move for a repeal of this law ‡. Thus LEPTINES moved for a law, not only to recal all the immunities formerly granted, but to deprive the people for the future of the power of granting any more ‖. Thus all bills of attainder ⸸ were forbid, or laws that affected one ATHENIAN, without extending to the whole commonwealth. Theſe abſurd clauſes, by which the legiſlature vainly attempted to bind itſelf for ever, proceeded from an univerſal ſenſe of the levity and inconſtancy of the people.

* *In* CTESIPHONTEM. 'Tis remarkable, that the firſt ſtep after the diſſolution of the Democracy by CRITIAS and the Thirty, was to annul the γραφη παρανομων, as we learn from DEMOSTHENES κατα Τιμοκ. The orator in this oration gives us the words of the law, eſtabliſhing the γραφη παρανομων, pag. 297. *ex edit.* ALDI. And he accounts for it, from the ſame principles we here reaſon upon.

† PLUT. *in vita* PELOP. ‡ DEMOST. *Olynth.* I. 2.

‖ DEMOST. *contra* LEPT. ⸸ DEMOST. *contra* ARISTOCRATEM.

II.

II. A wheel within a wheel, such as we observe in the German empire, is considered by Lord Shaftesbury * as an absurdity in politics: But what must we say to two equal wheels, which govern the same political machine, without any mutual check, controul, or subordination; and yet preserve the greatest harmony and concord? To establish two distinct legislatures, each of which possesses full and absolute authority within itself, and stands in no need of the other's assistance, in order to give validity to its acts; this may appear, beforehand, altogether impracticable, as long as men are actuated by the passions of ambition, emulation, and avarice, which have been hitherto their chief governing principles. And should I assert, that the state I have in my eye was divided into two distinct factions, each of which predominated in a distinct legislature, and yet produced no clashing in these independent powers; the supposition may appear almost incredible. And if, to augment the paradox, I should affirm, that this disjointed, irregular government, was the most active, triumphant, and illustrious commonwealth, that ever yet appeared on the stage of the world; I should certainly be told, that such a political chimera was as absurd as any vision of the poets. But there is no need for searching long, in order to prove the reality of the foregoing suppositions: For this was actually the case with the Roman republic.

The legislative power was there lodged within the *comitia centuriata* and *comitia tributa*. In the former, 'tis well known, the people voted according to their *census*; so that when the first class was unanimous, tho' it contained not, perhaps, the hundredth part of the commonwealth, it determined the whole; and, with the authority of the senate, established a law. In the latter, every vote was alike; and as the authority of the senate was not there

* Essay on the freedom of wit and humour, part 3. § 2.

requiſite, the lower people entirely prevailed, and gave law to the whole ſtate. In all party-diviſions, at firſt between the PATRICIANS and PLEBEIANS, afterwards between the nobles and the people, the intereſt of the Ariſtocracy was predominant in the firſt legiſlature; that of the Democracy in the ſecond: The one could always deſtroy what the other had eſtabliſhed: Nay, the one, by a ſudden and unforeſeen motion, might take the ſtart of the other, and totally annihilate its rival, by a vote, which, from the nature of the conſtitution, had the full authority of a law. But no ſuch conteſt or ſtruggle is obſerved in the hiſtory of ROME: No inſtance of a quarrel between theſe two legiſlatures; tho' many between the parties that governed in each. Whence aroſe this concord, which may ſeem ſo extraordinary?

The legiſlature eſtabliſhed at ROME, by the authority of SERVIUS TULLIUS, was the *comitia centuriata*, which, after the expulſion of the kings, rendered the government, for ſome time, altogether ariſtocratical. But the people, having numbers and force on their ſide, and being elated with frequent conqueſts and victories in their foreign wars, always prevailed when puſhed to extremities, and firſt extorted from the ſenate the magiſtracy of the tribunes, and then the legiſlative power of the *comitia tributa*. It then behoved the nobles to be more careful than ever not to provoke the people. For beſide the force which the latter were always poſſeſſed of, they had now got poſſeſſion of legal authority, and could inſtantly break in pieces any order or inſtitution which directly oppoſed them. By intrigue, by influence, by money, by combination, and by the reſpect paid their character, the nobles might often prevail, and direct the whole machine of government: But had they openly ſet their *comitia centuriata* in oppoſition to the *tributa*, they had ſoon loſt the advantage of that inſtitution, together with their conſuls, prætors, ediles, and all the magiſtrates elected

elected by it. But the *comitia tributa*, not having the same reason for respecting the *centuriata*, frequently repealed laws favourable to the Aristocracy: They limited the authority of the nobles, protected the people from oppression, and controlled the actions of the senate and magistracy. The *centuriata* found it convenient always to submit; and tho' equal in authority, yet being inferior in power, durst never directly give any shock to the other legislature, either by repealing its laws, or establishing laws, which, it foresaw, would soon be repealed by it.

No instance is found of any opposition or struggle between these *comitia*; except one slight attempt of this kind, mentioned by Appian in the third book of his civil wars. Mark Anthony, resolving to deprive Decimus Brutus of the government of Cisalpine Gaul, railed in the *Forum*, and called one of the *comitia*, in order to prevent the meeting of the other, which had been ordered by the senate. But affairs were then fallen into such confusion, and the Roman constitution was so near its final dissolution, that no inference can be drawn from such an expedient. This contest, besides, was founded more on form than party. It was the senate who ordered the *comitia tributa*, that they might obstruct the meeting of the *centuriata*, which, by the constitution, or at least forms of the government, could alone dispose of provinces.

Cicero was recalled by the *comitia centuriata*, tho' banished by the *tributa*, that is, by a *plebiscitum*. But his banishment, we may observe, never was considered as a legal deed, arising from the free choice and inclination of the people. It was always ascribed to the violence alone of Clodius, and to the disorders introduced by him into the government.

III. The *third* cuſtom which we propoſed to obſerve, regards ENGLAND; and tho' it be not ſo important as thoſe which we have pointed out in ATHENS and ROME, it is no leſs ſingular and remarkable. 'Tis a maxim in politics, which we readily admit as undiſputed and univerſal, That a power, however great, when granted by law to an eminent magiſtrate, is not ſo dangerous to liberty, as an authority, however inconſiderable, which he acquires from violence and uſurpation. For, beſides that the law always limits every power which it beſtows, the very receiving it as a conceſſion eſtabliſhes the authority whence it is derived, and preſerves the harmony of the conſtitution. By the ſame right that one prerogative is aſſumed without law, another may alſo be claimed, and another, with ſtill greater facility; while the firſt uſurpations both ſerve as precedents to the following, and give force to maintain them. Hence the heroiſm of HAMPDEN, who ſuſtained the whole violence of royal proſecution, rather than pay a tax of twenty ſhillings not impoſed by parliament; hence the care of all ENGLISH patriots to guard againſt the firſt encroachments of the crown; and hence alone the exiſtence, at this day, of ENGLISH liberty.

There is, however, one occaſion, where the parliament has departed from this maxim; and that is, in the *preſſing of ſeamen*. The exerciſe of an illegal power is here tacitly permitted in the crown; and tho' it has frequently been under deliberation, how that power might be rendered legal, and granted, under proper reſtrictions to the ſovereign, no ſafe expedient could ever be propoſed for that purpoſe, and the danger to liberty always appeared greater from law than from uſurpation. While this power is exerciſed to no other end than to man the navy, men willingly ſubmit to it, from a ſenſe of its uſe and neceſſity; and the ſailors, who are alone af-

affected by it, find no body to support them, in claiming the rights and privileges which the law grants, without distinction, to all English subjects. But were this power, on any occasion, made an instrument of faction or ministerial tyranny, the opposite faction, and indeed all lovers of their country, would immediately take the alarm, and support the injured party; the liberty of Englishmen would be asserted; juries would be implacable; and the tools of tyranny, acting both against law and equity, would meet with the severest vengeance. On the other hand, were the parliament to grant such an authority, they would probably fall into one of these two inconveniencies: They would either bestow it under so many restrictions as would make it lose its effects, by cramping the authority of the crown; or they would render it so large and comprehensive, as might give occasion to great abuses, for which we could, in that case, have no remedy. The very illegality of the power, at present, prevents its abuses, by affording so easy a remedy against them.

I pretend not, by this reasoning, to exclude all possibility of contriving a register for seamen, which might man the navy, without being dangerous to liberty. I only observe, that no satisfactory scheme of that nature has yet been proposed. Rather than adopt any project hitherto invented, we continue a practice seemingly the most absurd and unaccountable. Authority, in times of full internal peace and concord, is armed against law. A continued and open usurpation in the crown is permitted, amidst the greatest jealousy and watchfulness in the people; nay proceeding from those very principles: Liberty, in a country, of the highest liberty, is left intirely to its own defence, without any countenance or protection: The wild state of nature is renewed, in one of the most civilized societies of mankind: And great vio-

violences and disorders among the people, the most humane and the best natured, are committed with impunity; while the one party pleads obedience to the supreme magistrate, the other the sanction of fundamental laws.

ESSAY

ESSAY XI.

Of the POPULOUSNESS of ANTIENT NATIONS*.

THERE is very little ground, either from reaſon or experience, to conclude the univerſe eternal or incorruptible. The continual and rapid motion of matter, the violent revolutions with which every part is agitated, the changes remarked in the heavens, the plain traces as well as tradition of an univerſal deluge, or general convulſion of the elements; all theſe prove ſtrongly the mortality of this fabric of the world, and its paſſage, by corruption or diſſolution, from one ſtate or order to another. It muſt, therefore, as well as each individual form which it contains, have its infancy, youth, manhood, and old

* An ingenious writer has honoured this diſcourſe with an anſwer, full of politeneſs, erudition, and good ſenſe. So learned a refutation would have made the author ſuſpect, that his reaſonings were entirely overthrown, had he not uſed the precaution, from the beginning, to keep himſelf on the ſceptical ſide; and having taken this advantage of the ground, he was enabled, tho' with much inferior forces, to preſerve himſelf from a total defeat. That Reverend gentleman will always find, where his antagoniſt is ſo entrenched, that it will be difficult to force him. VARRO, in ſuch a ſituation, could defend himſelf againſt HANNIBAL, PHARNACES againſt CÆSAR. The author, however, very willingly acknowledges, that his antagoniſt has detected many miſtakes both in his authorities and reaſonings; and it was owing entirely to that gentleman's indulgence, that many more errors were not remarked. In this edition, advantage has been taken of his learned animadverſions, and the Eſſay has been rendered leſs imperfect than formerly.

age;

age; and 'tis probable, that in all these variations, man, equally with every animal and vegetable, will partake. In the flourishing age of the world, it may be expected, that the human species should possess greater vigour both of mind and body, more prosperous health, higher spirits, longer life, and a stronger inclination and power of generation. But if the general system of things, and human society of course, have any such gradual revolutions, they are too slow to be discernible in that short period which is comprehended by history and tradition. Stature and force of body, length of life, even courage and extent of genius, seem hitherto to have been, naturally in all ages, pretty much the same. The arts and sciences, indeed, have flourished in one period, and have decayed in another: But we may observe, that at the time when they rose to greatest perfection among one people, they were perhaps totally unknown to all the neighbouring nations; and tho' they universally decayed in one age, yet in a succeeding generation they again revived, and diffused themselves over the world. As far, therefore, as observation reaches, there is no universal difference discernible in the human species; and though it were allowed, that the universe, like an animal body, had a natural progress from infancy to old age; yet as it must still be uncertain whether, at present, it be advancing to its point of perfection, or declining from it, we cannot thence presuppose any decay in human nature *. To prove, therefore, or account for the greater populousness of antiquity, by the imaginary youth or vigour of the

* COLUMELLA says, lib. 3. cap. 8. that in ÆGYPT and AFRICA the bearing of twins was frequent, and even customary; *gemini partus familiares, ac pene solennes sunt.* If this was true, there is a physical difference both in countries and ages. For travellers make no such remarks of these countries at present. On the contrary, we are apt to suppose the northern nations more fertile. As these two countries were provinces of the ROMAN empire, 'tis difficult, though not altogether absurd, to suppose that such a man as COLUMELLA might be mistaken with regard to them.

world,

world will ſcarce be admitted by any juſt reaſoner. Theſe *general phyſical* cauſes ought entirely to be excluded from that queſtion.

There are indeed ſome more *particular phyſical* cauſes of great importance. Diſeaſes are mentioned in antiquity, which are almoſt unknown to modern medicine; and new diſeaſes have ariſen and propagated themſelves, of which there are no traces in antient hiſtory. And in this particular we may obſerve, upon compariſon, that the diſadvantage is very much on the ſide of the moderns. Not to mention ſome others of leſs importance; the ſmall-pox commits ſuch ravages, as would almoſt alone account for the great ſuperiority aſcribed to antient times. The tenth or the twelfth part of mankind, deſtroyed every generation, ſhould make a vaſt difference, it may be thought in the numbers of the people; and when joined to venereal diſtempers, a new plague diffuſed every where, this diſeaſe is perhaps equivalent, by its conſtant operation, to the three great ſcourges of mankind, war, peſtilence, and famine. Were it certain, therefore, that antient times, were more populous than the preſent, and could no moral cauſes be aſſigned for ſo great a change; theſe phyſical cauſes alone, in the opinion of many, would be ſufficient to give us ſatisfaction on that head.

But is it certain, that antiquity was ſo much more populous as is pretended? The extravagancies of VOSSIUS, with regard to this ſubject, are well known. But an author of much greater genius and diſcernment has ventured to affirm, that, according to the beſt computations which theſe ſubjects will admit of, there are not now, on the face of the earth, the fiftieth part of mankind, which exiſted in the time of JULIUS CÆSAR *. It may eaſily be obſerved, that the compariſons, in this caſe,

* *Lettres* PERSANES. See alſo *L'Eſprit de Loix*, liv. 23. cap. 17, 18, 19.

muſt

drawn from the ROMAN hiſtory more than the GRECIAN; and as the tranſactions of the former are generally the moſt familiar to us, we have thence formed all our concluſions. It muſt be owned, that the ROMANS never met with any ſuch general combination or confederacy againſt them, as might naturally be expected from their rapid conqueſts and declared ambition; but were allowed peaceably to ſubdue their neighbours, one after another, till they extended their dominion over the whole known world. Not to mention the fabulous hiſtory of their ITALIC wars; there was, upon HANNIBAL's invaſion of the ROMAN ſtate, a very remarkable criſis, which ought to have called up the attention of all civilized nations. It appeared afterwards (nor was it difficult to be obſerved at the time) † that this was a conteſt for univerſal empire; and yet no prince or ſtate ſeems to have been in the leaſt alarmed about the event or iſſue of the quarrel. PHILIP of MACEDON remained neuter, till he ſaw the victories of HANNIBAL; and then moſt imprudently formed an alliance with the conqueror, upon terms ſtill more imprudent. He ſtipulated, that he was to aſſiſt the CARTHAGINIAN ſtate in their conqueſt of ITALY; after which they engaged to ſend over forces into GREECE, to aſſiſt him in ſubduing the GRECIAN commonwealths ‡.

The RHODIAN and ACHAEAN republics are much celebrated by antient hiſtorians for their wiſdom and ſound policy; yet both of them aſſiſted the ROMANS in their wars againſt PHILIP and ANTIOCHUS. And what may be eſteemed ſtill a ſtronger proof, that this maxim was not familiarly known in thoſe ages; no ancient au-

† It was obſerved by ſome, as appears by the ſpeech of AGELAUS of NAUPACTUS, in the general congreſs of GREECE. See POLYB. lib. 5. cap. 104.

‡ TITI LIVII lib. 23. cap. 33.

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thor has ever remarked the imprudence of theſe meaſures, nor has even blamed that abſurd treaty above mentioned, made by PHILIP with the CARTHAGINIANS. Princes and ſtateſmen may in all ages be blinded in their reaſonings with regard to events, beforehand: But 'tis ſomewhat extraordinary, that hiſtorians, afterwards, ſhould not form a ſounder judgment of them.

MASSINISSA, ATTALUS, PRUSIAS, in ſatisfying their private paſſions, were, all of them, the inſtruments of the ROMAN greatneſs; and never ſeem to have ſuſpected, that they were forging their own chains, while they advanced the conqueſts of their ally. A ſimple treaty and agreement between MASSINISSA and the CARTHAGINIANS, ſo much required by mutual intereſt, barred the ROMANS from all entrance into AFRICA, and preſerved liberty to mankind.

The only prince we meet with in the ROMAN hiſtory, who ſeems to have underſtood the balance of power, is HIERO king of SYRACUSE. Tho' the ally of ROME, he ſent aſſiſtance to the CARTHAGINIANS, during the war of the auxiliaries: "Eſteeming it requiſite," ſays POLYBIUS †, "both in order to retain his dominions "in SICILY, and to preſerve the ROMAN friendſhip, "that CARTHAGE ſhould be ſafe; leſt by its fall the "remaining power ſhould be able, without contraſt or "oppoſition, to execute every purpoſe and undertaking. "And here he acted with great wiſdom and prudence. "For that is never, on any account, to be overlooked; "nor ought ſuch a force ever to be thrown into one "hand, as to incapacitate the neighbouring ſtates from "defending their rights againſt it." Here is the aim of modern politics pointed out in expreſs terms.

In ſhort, the maxim of preſerving the balance of power is founded ſo much on common ſenſe and obvious

† Lib. 2. cap. 35.

reaſoning, that 'tis impoſſible it could altogether have eſcaped antiquity, where we find, in other particulars, ſo many marks of deep penetration and diſcernment. If it was not ſo generally known and acknowledged as at preſent, it had, at leaſt, an influence on all the wiſer and more experienced princes and politicians. And indeed, even at preſent, however generally known and acknowledged among ſpeculative reaſoners, it has not, in practice, an authority much more extenſive among thoſe who govern the world.

After the fall of the ROMAN empire, the form of government eſtabliſhed by the northern conquerors, incapacitated them, in a great meaſure, from farther conqueſts, and long maintained each ſtate in its proper boundaries. But when vaſſalage and the feudal militia were aboliſhed, mankind were anew alarmed by the danger of univerſal monarchy, from the union of ſo many kingdoms and principalities in the perſon of the emperor CHARLES. But the power of the houſe of AUSTRIA, founded on extenſive but divided dominions, and their riches, derived chiefly from mines of gold and ſilver, were more likely to decay, of themſelves, from internal defects, than to overthrow all the bulwarks raiſed againſt them. In leſs than a century, the force of that violent and haughty race was ſhattered, their opulence diſſipated, their ſplendour eclipſed. A new power ſucceeded, more formidable to the liberties of EUROPE, poſſeſſing all the advantages of the former, and labouring under none of its defects; except a ſhare of that ſpirit of bigotry and perſecution, with which the houſe of AUSTRIA were ſo long, and ſtill are ſo much infatuated.

EUROPE has now, for above a century, remained on the defenſive againſt the greateſt force that ever, perhaps, was formed by the civil or political combination of mankind. And ſuch is the influence of the maxim here

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treated of, that tho' that ambitious nation, in the five laſt general wars, have been victorious in four †, and unſucceſsful only in one ‡, they have not much enlarged their dominions, nor acquired a total aſcendant over EUROPE. There remains rather room to hope, that, by maintaining the reſiſtance ſome time, the natural revolutions of human affairs, together with unforeſeen events and accidents, may guard us againſt univerſal monarchy, and preſerve the world from ſo great an evil.

In the three laſt of theſe general wars, BRITAIN has ſtood foremoſt in the glorious ſtruggle; and ſhe ſtill maintains her ſtation, as guardian of the general liberties of EUROPE, and patron of mankind. Beſide her advantages of riches and ſituation, her people are animated with ſuch a national ſpirit, and are ſo fully ſenſible of the ineſtimable bleſſings of their government, that we may hope their vigour never will languiſh in ſo neceſſary and ſo juſt a cauſe. On the contrary, if we may judge by the paſt, their paſſionate ardour ſeems rather to require ſome moderation; and they have oftener erred from a laudable exceſs than from a blameable deficiency.

In the *firſt* place, we ſeem to have been more poſſeſſed with the antient GREEK ſpirit of jealous emulation, than actuated with the prudent views of modern politics. Our wars with FRANCE have been begun with juſtice, and even, perhaps from neceſſity; but have always been too far puſhed from obſtinacy and paſſion. The ſame peace which was afterwards made at RYSWICK in 1697, was offered ſo early as the ninety-two; that concluded at UTRECHT in 1712 might have been finiſhed on as good conditions at GERTRUYTENBERG in the eight; and we might have given at FRANCFORT, in 1723, the

† Thoſe concluded by the peace of the PYRENEES, NIMEGUEN, RYSWICK, and AIX-LA-CHAPELLE.

‡ That concluded by the peace of UTRECHT.

ſame terms, which we were glad to accept of at AIX-LA-CHAPELLE in the forty-eight. Here then we ſee, that above half of our wars with FRANCE, and all our public debts, are owing more to our own imprudent vehemence, than to the ambition of our neighbours.

In the *ſecond* place, we are ſo declared in our oppoſition to FRENCH power, and ſo alert in defence of our allies, that they always reckon upon our force as upon their own; and expecting to carry on war at our expence, refuſe all reaſonable terms of accommodation. *Habent ſubjectos, tanquam ſuos; viles, ut alienos.* All the world knows, that the factious vote of the Houſe of Commons, in the beginning of the laſt parliament, with the profeſſed humour of the nation, made the queen of HUNGARY inflexible in her terms, and prevented that agreement with PRUSSIA, which would immediately have reſtored the general tranquillity of EUROPE.

In the *third* place, we are ſuch true combatants, that, when once engaged, we loſe all concern for ourſelves and our poſterity, and conſider only how we may beſt annoy the enemy. To mortgage our revenues at ſo deep a rate, in wars, where we were only acceſſories, was ſurely the moſt fatal deluſion, that a nation, who had any pretenſion to politics and prudence, has ever yet been guilty of. That remedy of funding, if it be a remedy, and not rather a poiſon, ought, in all reaſon, to be reſerved to the laſt extremity; and no evil, but the greateſt and moſt urgent, ſhould ever induce us to embrace ſo dangerous an expedient.

Theſe exceſſes, to which we have been carried, are prejudicial; and may, perhaps, in time, become ſtill more prejudicial another way, by begetting, as is uſual, the oppoſite extreme, and rendering us totally careleſs and ſupine with regard to the fate of EUROPE. The ATHENIANS, from the moſt buſtling, intriguing, warlike people

people of GREECE, finding their error in thruſting themſelves into every quarrel, abandoned all attention to foreign affairs; and in no conteſt ever took party on either ſide, except by their flatteries and complaiſance to the victor.

Enormous monarchies, ſuch as EUROPE at preſent is threatened with, are, probably, deſtructive to human nature; in their progreſs, in their continuance †, and even in their downfal, which never can be very diſtant from their eſtabliſhment. The military genius which aggrandized the monarchy, ſoon leaves the court, the capital, and the center of ſuch a government; while the wars are carried on at a great diſtance, and intereſt ſo ſmall a part of the ſtate. The antient nobility, whoſe affections attach them to their ſovereign, live all at court; and never will accept of military employments, which would carry them to remote and barbarous frontiers, where they are diſtant both from their pleaſures and their fortune. The arms of the ſtate muſt, therefore, be truſted to mercenary ſtrangers, without zeal, without attachment, without honour; ready on every occaſion to turn them againſt the prince, and join each deſperate malecontent, who offers pay and plunder. This is the neceſſary progreſs of human affairs: Thus human nature checks itſelf in its airy elevations: Thus ambition blindly labours for the deſtruction of the conqueror, of his family, and of every thing near and dear to him. The BOURBONS, truſting to the ſupport of their brave, faithful, and affectionate nobility, would puſh their advantage, without reſerve or limitation. Theſe, while fired with glory and emulation, can bear the fatigues and dangers of war; but never would ſubmit to languiſh in

† If the ROMAN empire was of advantage, it could only proceed from this, that mankind were generally in a very diſorderly, uncivilized condition, before its eſtabliſhment.

the garriſons of HUNGARY or LITHUANIA, forgot at court, and ſacrificed to the intrigues of every minion or miſtreſs, who approaches the prince. The troops are filled with CRAVATES and TARTARS, HUSSARS and COSSACS; intermingled, perhaps, with a few ſoldiers of fortune from the better provinces: And the melancholy fate of the ROMAN emperors, from the ſame cauſe, is renewed over and over again, till the final diſſolution of the monarchy.

ESSAY

ESSAY VIII.

Of TAXES.

THERE is a maxim, that prevails among thoſe whom in this country we call *ways and means men*, and who are denominated *Financiers* and *Maltotiers* in FRANCE, *That every new tax creates a new ability in the ſubject to bear it, and that each increaſe of public burdens increaſes proportionably the induſtry of the people.* This maxim is of ſuch a nature as is moſt likely to be extremely abuſed; and is ſo much the more dangerous, as its truth cannot be altogether denied; but it muſt be owned, when kept within certain bounds, to have ſome foundation in reaſon and experience.

When a tax is laid upon commodities, which are conſumed by the common people, the neceſſary conſequence may ſeem to be, that either the poor muſt retrench ſomething from their way of living, or raiſe their wages, ſo as to make the burden of the tax fall intirely upon the rich. But there is a third conſequence, which very often follows upon taxes, *viz.* that the poor increaſe their induſtry, perform more work, and live as well as before, without demanding more for their labour. Where taxes are moderate, are laid on gradually, and affect not the neceſſaries of life, this conſequence naturally follows; and 'tis certain, that ſuch difficulties often ſerve to excite the induſtry of a people, and render them more opulent

lent and laborious, than others, who enjoy the greateſt advantages. For we may obſerve, as a parallel inſtance, that the moſt commercial nations have not always poſſeſſed the greateſt extent of fertile land; but, on the contrary, that they have laboured under many natural diſadvantages. TYRE, ATHENS, CARTHAGE, RHODES, GENOA, VENICE, HOLLAND, are ſtrong examples to this purpoſe. And in all hiſtory, we find only three inſtances of large and fertile countries, which have poſſeſſed much trade; the NETHERLANDS, ENGLAND, and FRANCE. The two former ſeem to have been allured by the advantages of their maritime ſituation and the neceſſity they lay under of frequenting foreign ports, in order to procure what their own climate refuſed them. And as to FRANCE, trade has come very late into that kingdom, and ſeems to have been the effect of reflection and obſervation in an ingenious and enterpriſing people, who remarked the immenſe riches acquired by ſuch of the neighbouring nations as cultivated navigation and commerce.

The places mentioned by CICERO *, as poſſeſſed of the greateſt commerce in his time, are ALEXANDRIA, COLCHOS, TYRE, SIDON, ANDROS, CYPRUS, PAMPHYLIA, LYCIA, RHODES, CHIOS, BYZANTIUM, LESBOS, SMYRNA, MILETUM, COOS. All theſe, except ALEXANDRIA, were either ſmall iſlands, or narrow territories. And that city owed its trade intirely to the happineſs of its ſituation.

Since therefore ſome natural neceſſities or diſadvantages may be thought favourable to induſtry, why may not artificial burdens have the ſame effect? Sir WILLIAM TEMPLE †, we may obſerve, aſcribes the induſtry of the DUTCH intirely to neceſſity, proceeding from their natural

* Epiſt. ad ATT. lib. 9. ep. 11.

† Account of the NETHERLANDS, Chap. 6.

tural diſadvantages; and illuſtrates his doctrine by a very ſtriking compariſon with IRELAND; "where," ſays he, "by the largeneſs and plenty of the ſoil, and ſcarcity of "people, all things neceſſary to life are ſo cheap, that "an induſtrious man, by two days labour, may gain "enough to feed him the reſt of the week. Which I "take to be a very plain ground of the lazineſs attri-"buted to the people. For men naturally prefer eaſe "before labour, and will not take pains if they can live "idle; tho' when, by neceſſity, they have been inured "to it, they cannot leave it, being grown a cuſtom ne-"ceſſary to their health, and to their very entertainment. "Nor perhaps is the change harder, from conſtant eaſe "to labour, than from conſtant labour to eaſe." After which the author proceeds to confirm his doctrine, by enumerating, as above, the places where trade has moſt flouriſhed, in antient and modern times; and which are commonly obſerved to be ſuch narrow confined territories, as beget a neceſſity for induſtry.

'Tis always obſerved, in years of ſcarcity, if it be not extreme, that the poor labour more, and really live better, than in years of great plenty, when they indulge themſelves in idleneſs and riot. I have been told, by a conſiderable manufacturer, that in the year 1740, when bread and proviſions of all kinds were very dear, his workmen not only made a ſhift to live, but paid debts, which they had contracted in former years, that were much more favourable and abundant †.

This doctrine, therefore, with regard to taxes, may be admitted in ſome degree: But beware of the abuſe. Exorbitant taxes, like extreme neceſſity, deſtroy induſtry, by producing deſpair; and even before they reach this pitch, they raiſe the wages of the labourer and manufacturer, and heighten the price of all commodities. An

† To this purpoſe ſee alſo Eſſay I. at the end.

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attentive diſintereſted legiſlature, will obſerve the point when the emolument ceaſes, and the prejudice begins: But as the contrary character is much more common, 'tis to be feared that taxes, all over EUROPE, are multiplying to ſuch a degree, as will intirely cruſh all art and induſtry; tho', perhaps, their firſt increaſe, together with other circumſtances, might have contributed to the growth of theſe advantages.

The beſt taxes are ſuch as are levied upon conſumptions, eſpecially thoſe of luxury; becauſe ſuch taxes are leſs felt by the people. They ſeem, in ſome meaſure, voluntary; ſince a man may chuſe how far he will uſe the commodity which is taxed: They are paid gradually and inſenſibly: And being confounded with the natural price of the commodity, they are ſcarcely perceived by the conſumers. Their only diſadvantage is, that they are expenſive in the levying.

Taxes upon poſſeſſions are levied without expence; but have every other diſadvantage. Moſt ſtates, however, are obliged to have recourſe to them, in order to ſupply the deficiencies of the other.

But the moſt pernicious of all taxes are thoſe which are arbitrary. They are commonly converted, by their management, into puniſhments on induſtry; and alſo, by their unavoidable inequality, are more grievous than by the real burden which they impoſe. 'Tis ſurpriſing, therefore, to ſee them have place among any civilized people.

In general, all poll-taxes, even when not arbitrary, which they commonly are, may be eſteemed dangerous: Becauſe it is ſo eaſy for the ſovereign to add a little more, and a little more, to the ſum demanded, that theſe taxes are apt to become altogether oppreſſive and intolerable. On the other hand, a duty upon commodities checks itſelf;

itſelf; and a prince will ſoon find, that an increaſe of the impoſt is no increaſe of his revenue. It is not eaſy, therefore, for a people to be altogether ruined by ſuch taxes.

Hiſtorians inform us, that one of the chief cauſes of the deſtruction of the ROMAN ſtate, was the alteration which CONSTANTINE introduced into the finances, by ſubſtituting an univerſal poll-tax, in lieu of almoſt all the tithes, cuſtoms, and exciſes, which formerly compoſed the revenue of the *empire*. The people, in all the provinces, were ſo grinded and oppreſſed by the *publicans*, that they were glad to take refuge under the conquering arms of the barbarians; whoſe dominion, as they had fewer neceſſities and leſs art, was found preferable to the refined tyranny of the ROMANS.

There is a prevailing opinion, that all taxes, however levied, fall upon the land at laſt. Such an opinion may be uſeful in BRITAIN, by checking the landed gentlemen, in whoſe hands our legiſlature is chiefly lodged, and making them preſerve great regard for trade and induſtry. But I muſt confeſs, that this principle, tho' firſt advanced by a celebrated writer, has ſo little appearance of reaſon, that, were it not for his authority, it had never been received by any body. Every man, to be ſure, is deſirous of puſhing off from himſelf the burden of any tax, which is impoſed, and laying it upon others: But as every man has the ſame inclination, and is upon the defenſive; no ſet of men can be ſuppoſed to prevail altogether in this conteſt. And why the landed gentleman ſhould be the victim of the whole, and ſhould not be able to defend himſelf, as well as others are, I cannot readily imagine. All tradeſmen, indeed, would willingly prey upon him, and divide him among them, if they could: But this inclination they always have, tho' no taxes were levied; and the ſame methods, by which he guards againſt the

the impoſition of tradeſmen before taxes, will ſerve him afterwards, and make them ſhare the burden with him.

I ſhall conclude this ſubject with obſerving, that we have, with regard to taxes, an inſtance of what frequently happens in political inſtitutions, that the conſequences of things are diametrically oppoſite to what we ſhould expect on the firſt appearance. 'Tis regarded as a fundamental maxim of the TURKISH government, That the *Grand Signior*, tho' abſolute maſter of the lives and fortunes of each individual, has no authority to impoſe a new tax; and every OTTOMAN prince, who has made ſuch an attempt, either has been obliged to retract, or has found the fatal effects of his perſeverance. One would imagine, that this prejudice or eſtabliſhed opinion were the firmeſt barrier in the world againſt oppreſſion; yet 'tis certain, that its effect is quite contrary. The emperor, having no regular method of increaſing his revenue, muſt allow all the baſhaws and governors to oppreſs and abuſe the ſubjects: And theſe he ſqueezes after their return from their government. Whereas, if he could impoſe a new tax, like our EUROPEAN princes, his intereſt would ſo far be united with that of his people, that he would immediately feel the bad effects of theſe diſorderly levies of money, and would find, that a pound, raiſed by general impoſition, would have leſs pernicious effects, than a ſhilling taken in ſo unequal and arbitrary a manner.

ESSAY

ESSAY IX.

Of PUBLIC CREDIT.

IT appears to have been the common practice of antiquity, to make provision, in times of peace, for the neceſſities of war, and to hoard up treaſures beforehand, as the inſtruments either of conqueſt or defence; without truſting to extraordinary impoſts, much leſs to borrowing, in times of diſorder and confuſion. Beſides the immenſe ſums above mentioned †, which were amaſſed by ATHENS, and by the PTOLEMIES, and other ſucceſſors of ALEXANDER; we learn from PLATO ‡, that the frugal LACEDEMONIANS had alſo collected a great treaſure; and ARRIAN § and PLUTARCH ‖ ſpecify the riches which ALEXANDER got poſſeſſion of on the conqueſt of SUSA and ECBATANA, and which were reſerved, ſome of them, from the time of CYRUS. If I remember right, the ſcripture alſo mentions the treaſure of HEZEKIAH and the JEWISH princes; as profane hiſtory does that of PHILIP and PERSEUS, kings of MACEDON. The ancient republics of GAUL had commonly large ſums in reſerve ⸸. Every one knows the treaſure ſeized in ROME by JULIUS CÆSAR, during the

† Eſſay V. ‡ ALCIB. I. § Lib. 3.

‖ PLUT. *in vita* ALEX. He makes theſe treaſures amount to 80,000 talents, or about 15 millions ſterl. QUINTUS CURTIUS (Lib. 5. Cap. 2.) ſays, that ALEXANDER found in SUSA above 50,000 talents.

⸸ STRABO, Lib. 4.

civil

civil wars; and we find afterwards, that the wiſer emperors, AUGUSTUS, TIBERIUS, VESPASIAN, SEVERUS, &c. always diſcovered the prudent foreſight, of ſaving great ſums againſt any public exigency.

On the contrary, our modern expedient, which has become very general, is to mortgage the public revenues, and to truſt that poſterity, during peace, will pay off the incumbrances contracted during the preceding war: And they, having before their eyes, ſo good an example of their wiſe fathers, have the ſame prudent reliance on their poſterity; who, at laſt, from neceſſity more than choice, are obliged to place the ſame confidence in a new poſterity. But not to waſte time in declaiming againſt a practice which appears ruinous, beyond the evidence of an hundred demonſtrations; it ſeems pretty apparent, that the antient maxims are, in this reſpect, much more prudent than the modern; even though the latter had been confined within ſome reaſonable bounds, and had ever, in any inſtance, been attended with ſuch frugality, in time of peace, as to diſcharge the debts incurred by an expenſive war. For why ſhould the caſe be ſo very different between the public and an individual, as to make us eſtabliſh ſuch different maxims of conduct for each? If the funds of the former be greater, its neceſſary expences are proportionably larger; if its reſources be more numerous, they are not infinite; and as its frame ſhould be calculated for a much longer duration, than the date of a ſingle life, or even of a family, it ſhould embrace maxims, large, durable, and generous, agreeable to the ſuppoſed extent of its exiſtence. To truſt to chances and temporary expedients, is, indeed, what the neceſſity of human affairs frequently reduces us to; but whoever voluntarily depend on ſuch reſources, have not neceſſity, but their own folly, to accuſe for their misfortunes, when any ſuch befal them.

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If the abuſes of treaſures be dangerous, either by engaging the ſtate in raſh enterprizes, or making it neglect military diſcipline, in confidence of its riches; the abuſes of mortgaging are more certain and inevitable; poverty, impotence, and ſubjection to foreign powers.

According to modern policy, war is attended with every deſtructive circumſtance; loſs of men, increaſe of taxes, decay of commerce, diſſipation of money, devaſtation by ſea and land. According to ancient maxims, the opening of the public treaſure, as it produced an uncommon affluence of gold and ſilver, ſerved as a temporary encouragement to induſtry, and attoned, in ſome degree, for the inevitable calamities of war.

What then ſhall we ſay to the new paradox, That public incumbrances are, of themſelves, advantageous, independent of the neceſſity of contracting them; and that any ſtate, even though it were not preſſed by a foreign enemy, could not poſſibly have embraced a wiſer expedient for promoting commerce and riches, than to create funds, and debts, and taxes, without limitation? Diſcourſes, ſuch as theſe, might naturally have paſſed for trials of wit among rhetoricians, like the panegyrics on folly and a fever, on Busiris and Nero, had we not ſeen ſuch abſurd maxims patronized by great miniſters, and by a whole party among us. And theſe puzzling arguments, (for they deſerve not the name of ſpecious) though they could not be the foundation of Lord Oxford's conduct, for he had more ſenſe; ſerved at leaſt to keep his partizans in countenance, and perplex the underſtanding of the nation.

Let us examine the conſequences of public debts, both in our domeſtic management, by their influence on commerce and induſtry; and in our foreign tranſactions, by their effect on wars and negotiations.

There is a word, which is here in the mouth of every body, and which, I find, has alſo got abroad, and is much employed by foreign writers †, in imitation of the ENGLISH; and this is, CIRCULATION. This word ſerves as an account of every thing; and though I confeſs, that I have ſought for its meaning in the preſent ſubject, ever ſince I was a ſchool-boy, I have never yet been able to diſcover it. What poſſible advantage is there which the nation can reap by the eaſy tranſference of ſtock from hand to hand? Or is there any parallel to be drawn from the circulation of other commodities, to that of chequer-notes and INDIA bonds? Where a manufacturer has a quick ſale of his goods to the merchant, the merchant to the ſhopkeeper, the ſhopkeeper to his cuſtomers; this enlivens induſtry, and gives new encouragement to the firſt dealer or the manufacturer and all his tradeſmen, and makes them produce more and better commodities of the ſame ſpecies. A ſtagnation is here pernicious, wherever it happens; becauſe it operates backwards, and ſtops or benumbs the induſtrious hand in its production of what is uſeful to human life. But what production we owe to CHANGE-ALLEY, or even what conſumption, except that of coffee, and pen, ink, and paper, I have not yet learned; nor can one foreſee the loſs or decay of any one beneficial commerce or commodity, though that place and all its inhabitants were for ever buried in the ocean.

But though this term has never been explained by thoſe who inſiſt ſo much on the advantages that reſult from a circulation, there ſeems, however, to be ſome benefit of a ſimilar kind, ariſing from our incumbrances: As indeed, what human evil is there, which is not attended with ſome advantage? This we ſhall endeavour to

† MELON, DU TOT, LAW, in the pamphlets publiſhed in FRANCE.

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explain, that we may eſtimate the weight which we ought to allow it.

Public ſecurities are with us become a kind of money, and paſs as readily at the current price as gold or ſilver. Wherever any profitable undertaking offers itſelf, however expenſive, there are never wanting hands enough to embrace it; nor need a trader, who has ſums in the public ſtocks, fear to launch out into the moſt extenſive trade; ſince he is poſſeſſed of funds, which will anſwer the moſt ſudden demand that can be made upon him. No merchant thinks it neceſſary to keep by him any conſiderable caſh. Bank-ſtock, or India-bonds, eſpecially the latter, ſerve all the ſame purpoſes; becauſe he can diſpoſe of them, or pledge them to a banker, in a quarter of an hour; and at the ſame time they are not idle, even when in his ſcritoire, but bring him in a conſtant revenue. In ſhort, our national debts furniſh merchants with a ſpecies of money, that is continually multiplying in their hands, and produces ſure gain, beſides the profits of their commerce. This muſt enable them to trade upon leſs profit. The ſmall profit of the merchant renders the commodity cheaper, cauſes a greater conſumption, quickens the labour of the common people, and helps to ſpread arts and induſtry through the whole ſociety.

There are alſo, we may obſerve, in England, and in all ſtates, which have both commerce and public debts, a ſet of men, who are half-merchants, half ſtock-holders, and may be ſuppoſed willing to trade for ſmall profits; becauſe commerce is not their principal or ſole ſupport, and their revenues in the funds are a ſure reſource for themſelves and their families. Were there no funds, great merchants would have no expedient for realizing or ſecuring any part of their profit, but by making purchaſes of land; and land has many diſadvantages in com-

pariſon of funds. Requiring more care and inſpection, it divides the time and attention of the merchant; upon any tempting offer or extraordinary accident in trade, it is not ſo eaſily converted into money; and as it attracts too much, both by the many natural pleaſures it affords, and the authority it gives, it ſoon converts the citizen into the country gentleman. More men, therefore, with large ſtocks and incomes, may naturally be ſuppoſed to continue in trade, where there are public debts: and this, it muſt be owned, is of ſome advantage to commerce, by diminiſhing its profits, promoting circulation, and encouraging induſtry †.

But, in oppoſition to theſe two favourable circumſtances, perhaps of no very great importance, weigh the many diſadvantages which attend our public debts, in the whole *interior* œconomy of the ſtate: You will find no compariſon between the ill and the good which reſult from them.

Firſt, 'Tis certain, that national debts cauſe a mighty confluence of people and riches to the capital, by the great ſums which are levied in the provinces to pay the intereſt of thoſe debts; and perhaps, too, by the advantages in trade above mentioned, which they give the merchants in the capital above the reſt of the kingdom. The queſtion is, Whether, in our caſe, it be for the public intereſt, that ſo many privileges ſhould be conferred on LONDON, which has already arrived at ſuch an enormous ſize, and ſeems ſtill increaſing? Some men are apprehenſive of the conſequences. For my part, I cannot forbear thinking, that tho' the head is undoubt-

† On this head, I ſhall obſerve, without interrupting the thread of the argument, that the multiplicity of our public debts ſerves rather to ſink the intereſt, and that the more the government borrows, the cheaper may they expect to borrow; contrary to firſt appearance, and contrary to common opinion. The profits of trade have an influence on intereſt. See Eſſay IV.

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edly too big for the body, yet that great city is so happily situated, that its excessive bulk causes less inconvenience than even a smaller capital to a greater kingdom. There is more difference between the prices of all provisions in PARIS and LANGUEDOC, than between those in LONDON and YORKSHIRE.

Secondly, Public stocks, being a kind of paper-credit, have all the disadvantages attending that species of money. They banish gold and silver from the most considerable commerce of the state, reduce them to common circulation, and by that means render all provisions and labour dearer than otherwise they would be.

Thirdly, The taxes which are levied to pay the interests of these debts, are apt to be a check upon industry, to heighten the price of labour, and to be an oppression on the poorer sort.

Fourthly, As foreigners possess a share of our national funds, they render the public, in a manner, tributary to them, and may in time occasion the transport of our people and our industry.

Fifthly, The greatest part of public stock being always in the hands of idle people, who live on their revenue, our funds give great encouragement to an useless and inactive life.

But tho' the injury which arises to commerce and industry from our public funds, will appear, upon balancing the whole, very considerable, it is trivial, in comparison of the prejudice which results to the state considered as a body politic, which must support itself in the society of nations, and have various transactions with other states, in wars and negotiations. The ill, there, is pure and unmixed, without any favourable circumstance to atone for it: and 'tis an ill too of a nature the highest and most important.

We have, indeed, been told, that the public is no weaker upon account of its debts; ſince they are moſtly due among ourſelves, and bring as much property to one as they take from another. 'Tis like transferring money from the right hand to the left; which leaves the perſon neither richer nor poorer than before. Such looſe reaſonings and ſpecious compariſons will always paſs, where we judge not upon principles. I aſk, Is it poſſible, in the nature of things, to overburthen a nation with taxes, even where the ſovereign reſides among them? The very doubt ſeems extravagant; ſince 'tis requiſite in every commonwealth, that there be a certain proportion obſerved between the laborious and the idle part of it. But if all our preſent taxes be mortgaged, muſt we not invent new ones? And may not this matter be carried to a length that is ruinous and deſtructive?

In every nation, there are always ſome methods of levying money more eaſy than others, agreeable to the way of living of the people, and the commodities they make uſe of. In BRITAIN, the exciſes upon malt and beer afford a very large revenue; becauſe the operations of malting and brewing are very tedious, and are impoſſible to be concealed; and at the ſame time, theſe commodities are not ſo abſolutely neceſſary to life, as that the raiſing their price would very much affect the poorer ſort. Theſe taxes being all mortgaged, what difficulty to find new ones! what vexation and ruin of the poor!

Duties upon conſumptions are more equal and eaſy than thoſe upon poſſeſſions. What a loſs to the public, that the former are all exhauſted, and that we muſt have recourſe to the more grievous method of levying taxes!

Were all the proprietors of land only ſtewards to the public, muſt not neceſſity force them to practiſe all the arts of oppreſſion uſed by ſtewards, where the abſence or

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negligence of the proprietor render them ſecure againſt enquiry?

It will ſcarce be aſſerted, that no bounds ought ever to be ſet to national debts; and that the public would be no weaker, were twelve or fifteen ſhillings in the pound, land-tax, mortgaged, with all the preſent cuſtoms and exciſes. There is ſomething therefore in the caſe, beſide the mere transferring of property from one hand to another. In 500 years, the poſterity of thoſe now in the coaches, and of thoſe upon the boxes, will probably have changed places, without affecting the public by theſe revolutions.

Suppoſe the public once fairly brought to that condition, to which it is haſtening with ſuch amazing rapidity; ſuppoſe the land to be taxed eighteen or nineteen ſhillings in the pound; for it can never bear the whole twenty: ſuppoſe all the exciſes and cuſtoms to be ſcrewed up to the outmoſt which the nation can bear, without entirely loſing its commerce and induſtry; and ſuppoſe that all thoſe funds are mortgaged to perpetuity, and that the invention and wit of all our projectors can find no new impoſition which may ſerve as the foundation of a new loan; and let us conſider the neceſſary conſequences of this ſituation. Tho' the imperfect ſtate of our political knowlege, and the narrow capacities of men make it difficult to foretel the effects which will reſult from any untried meaſure, the ſeeds of ruin are here ſcattered with ſuch profuſion as not to eſcape the eye of the moſt careleſs obſerver.

In this unnatural ſtate of ſociety, the only perſons who poſſeſs any revenue, beyond the immediate effects of their induſtry, are the ſtock-holders, who draw almoſt all the rent of the land and houſes, beſides the produce of all the cuſtoms and exciſes. Theſe are men, who have no connexions in the ſtate, who can enjoy their revenue in any

part of the world in which they chooſe to reſide, who will naturally bury themſelves in the capital, or in great cities, and who will ſink into the lethargy of a ſtupid and pampered luxury, without ſpirit, ambition, or enjoyment. Adieu to all ideas of nobility, gentry, and family. The ſhocks can be transferred in an inſtant, and being in ſuch a fluctuating ſtate, will ſeldom be tranſmitted during three generations from father to ſon. Or were they to remain ever ſo long in one family, they convey no hereditary authority or credit to the poſſeſſors; and by this means, the ſeveral ranks of men, which form a kind of independant magiſtracy in a ſtate, inſtituted by the hand of nature, are entirely loſt; and every man in authority derives his influence from the commiſſion alone of the ſovereign. No expedient remains for preventing or ſuppreſſing inſurrections, but mercenary armies: No expedient at all remains for reſiſting tyranny: Elections are ſwayed by bribery and corruption alone: And the middle power between king and people being totally removed, a horrible deſpotiſm muſt infallibly prevail. The land-holders, deſpiſed for their poverty, and hated for their oppreſſions, will be utterly unable to make any oppoſition to it.

Tho' a reſolution ſhould be formed by the legiſlature never to impoſe any tax which hurts commerce and diſcourages induſtry, it will be impoſſible for men, in ſubjects of ſuch extreme delicacy, to reaſon ſo juſtly as never to be miſtaken, or amidſt difficulties ſo urgent, never to be ſeduced from their reſolution. The continual fluctuations in commerce require continual alterations in the nature of the taxes; which expoſes the legiſlature every moment to the danger both of wilful and involuntary error. And any great blow given to trade, whether by injudicious taxes or by other accidents, throws the whole ſyſtem of the government into confuſion.

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But what expedient is the public now to fall upon, even ſuppoſing trade to continue in the moſt flouriſhing condition, to ſupport its foreign wars and enterprizes, and to defend its own honour and intereſts or thoſe of its allies? I do not aſk how the public is to exert ſuch a prodigious power as it has maintained during our late wars; where we have ſo much exceeded, not only our own natural ſtrength, but even that of the greateſt empires. This extravagance is the abuſe complained of, as the ſource of all the dangers to which we are at preſent expoſed. But ſince we muſt ſtill ſuppoſe great commerce and opulence to remain, even after every fund is mortgaged; thoſe riches muſt be defended by proportionable power, and whence is the public to derive the revenue which ſupports it? It muſt plainly be from a continual taxation of the annuitants, or which is the ſame thing, from mortgaging anew, on every exigency, a certain part of their annuity; and thus making them contribute to their own defence, and to that of the nation. But the difficulties, attending this ſyſtem of policy, will eaſily appear, whether we ſuppoſe the king to have become abſolute maſter, or to be ſtill controuled by national councils, in which the annuitants themſelves muſt neceſſarily bear the principal ſway.

If the prince has become abſolute, as may naturally be expected from this ſituation of affairs, it is ſo eaſy for him to encreaſe his exactions upon the annuitants, which amount only to the retaining money in his own hands, that this ſpecies of property would ſoon loſe all its credit, and the whole income of every individual in the ſtate muſt lie entirely at the mercy of the ſovereign: A degree of deſpotiſm which no oriental monarchy has ever yet attained. If, on the contrary, the conſent of the annuitants be requiſite for every taxation, they will never be perſuaded to contribute ſufficiently even to the ſupport of government; as the diminution of their revenue

venue must in that case be very sensible, would not be disguised under the appearance of a branch of excise or customs, and would not be shared by any other order of the state, who are already supposed to be taxed to the utmost. There are instances, in some republics, of a hundredth penny, and sometimes of the fiftieth, being given to the support of the state; but this is always an extraordinary exertion of power, and can never become the foundation of a constant national defence. We have always found, where a government has mortgaged all its revenues, that it necessarily sinks into a state of languor, inactivity and impotence.

Such are the inconveniences, which may reasonably be foreseen, of this situation, to which GREAT BRITAIN is visibly tending. Not to mention, the numberless inconveniences, which cannot be foreseen, and which must result from so monstrous a situation as that of making the public the sole proprietor of land, besides investing it with every branch of customs and excise, which the fertile imagination of ministers and projectors have been able to invent.

I must confess, that there is a strange supineness, from long custom, crept into all ranks of men, with regard to public debts, not unlike what divines so vehemently complain of with regard to their religious doctrines. We all own, that the most sanguine imagination cannot hope, either that this or any future ministry will be possessed of such rigid and steady frugality, as to make any considerable progress in the payment of our debts; or that the situation of foreign affairs will, for any long time, allow them leisure and tranquillity for such an undertaking.† *What then is to become of us?* Were we ever so

† In times of peace and security, when alone it is possible to pay debt, the monied interest are averse to receive partial payments, which they know not how to dispose of to advantage; and the landed interest are averse to continue

ſo good Chriſtians, and ever ſo reſigned to Providence; this, methinks, were a curious queſtion, even conſidered as a ſpeculative one, and what it might not be altogether impoſſible to form ſome conjectural ſolution of. The events here will depend little upon the contingencies of battles, negotiations, intrigues and factions. There ſeems to be a natural progreſs of things, which may guide our reaſoning. As it would have required but a moderate ſhare of prudence, when we firſt began this practice of mortgaging, to have foretold, from the nature of men and of miniſters, that things would neceſſarily be carried to the length we ſee; ſo now, that they have at laſt happily reached it, it may not be difficult to gueſs at the conſequences. It muſt, indeed, be one of theſe two events; either the nation muſt deſtroy public credit, or public credit will deſtroy the nation. 'Tis impoſſible they can both ſubſiſt, after the manner they have been hitherto managed, in this, as well as in ſome other nations.

There was, indeed, a ſcheme for the payment of our debts, which was propoſed by an excellent citizen, Mr. Hutchinson, above thirty years ago, and which was much approved of by ſome men of ſenſe, but never was likely to take effect. He aſſerted, that there was a fallacy in imagining that the public owed this debt; for that really every individual owed a proportional ſhare of it, and paid, in his taxes, a proportional ſhare of the intereſt, beſide the expences of levying theſe taxes. Had we not better, then, ſays he, make a proportional diſtribution of the debt among us, and each of us contribute a ſum ſuitable to his property, and by that means

tinue the taxes requiſite for that purpoſe. Why therefore ſhould a miniſter perſevere in a meaſure ſo diſagreeable to all parties? For the ſake, I ſuppoſe, of a poſterity, which he will never ſee, or of a few reaſonable reflecting people, whoſe united intereſt, perhaps, will not be able to ſecure him the ſmalleſt burrough in England. 'Tis not likely we ſhall ever find any miniſter ſo bad a politician. With regard to theſe narrow deſtructive maxims of politics, all miniſters are expert enough.

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diſcharge at once all our funds and public mortgages? He ſeems not to have conſidered, that the laborious poor pay a conſiderable part of the taxes by their annual conſumptions, tho' they could not advance, at once, a proportional part of the ſum required. Not to mention, that property in money and ſtock in trade might eaſily be concealed or diſguiſed; and that viſible property in lands and houſes would really at laſt anſwer for the whole: An inequality and oppreſſion which never would be ſubmitted to. But tho' this project is never likely to take place; 'tis not altogether improbable, that when the nation become heartily ſick of their debts, and are cruelly oppreſſed by them, ſome daring projector may ariſe with viſionary ſchemes for their diſcharge. And as public credit will begin, by that time, to be a little frail, the leaſt touch will deſtroy it, as happened in FRANCE; and in this manner it will *die of the doctor* *:

But 'tis more probable, that the breach of national faith will be the neceſſary effect of wars, defeats, misfortunes, and public calamities, or even perhaps of victories and conqueſts. I muſt confeſs, when I ſee princes and ſtates fighting and quarrelling, amidſt their debts, funds, and public mortgages, it always brings to my mind a match of cudgel-playing fought in a *China* ſhop. How

* Some neighbouring ſtates practiſe an eaſy expedient, by which they lighten their public debts. The FRENCH have a cuſtom (as the Romans formerly had) of augmenting their money; and this the nation has been ſo much familiarized to, that it hurts not public credit, tho' it be really cutting off at once, by an edict, ſo much of their debts. The DUTCH diminiſh the intereſt, without the conſent of their creditors; or, which is the ſame thing, they arbitrarily tax the funds as well as other property. Could we practiſe either of theſe methods, we need never be oppreſſed by the national debt; and 'tis not impoſſible but one of theſe, or ſome other method, may, at all adventures, be tried, on the augmentation of our incumbrances and difficulties. But people in this country are ſo good reaſoners upon whatever regards their intereſt, that ſuch a practice will deceive no body; and public credit will probably tumble at once by ſo dangerous a trial.

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can it be expected, that ſovereigns will ſpare a ſpecies of property, which is pernicious to themſelves and to the public, when they have ſo little compaſſion on lives and properties, which are uſeful to both? Let the time come (and ſurely it will come) when the new funds, created for the exigencies of the year, are not ſubſcribed to, and raiſe not the money projected. Suppoſe, either that the caſh of the nation is exhauſted; or that our faith, which has been hitherto ſo ample, begins to fail us. Suppoſe, that, in this diſtreſs, the nation is threatened with an invaſion; a rebellion is ſuſpected or broke out at home; a ſquadron cannot be equipped for want of pay, victuals, or repairs; or even a foreign ſubſidy cannot be advanced. What muſt a prince or miniſter do in ſuch an emergence? The right of ſelf-preſervation is unalienable in every individual, much more in every community. And the folly of our ſtateſmen muſt then be greater than the folly of thoſe who firſt contracted debt, or, what is more, than that of thoſe who truſted, or continue to truſt this ſecurity, if theſe ſtateſmen have the means of ſafety in their hands, and do not employ them. The funds, created and mortgaged, will, by that time, bring in a large yearly revenue, ſufficient for the defence and ſecurity of the nation: Money is perhaps lying in the exchequer, ready for the diſcharge of the quarterly intereſt: Neceſſity calls, fear urges, reaſon exhorts, compaſſion alone exclaims: The money will immediately be ſeized for the current ſervice, under the moſt ſolemn proteſtations, perhaps, of being immediately replaced. But no more is requiſite. The whole fabric, already tottering, falls to the ground, and buries thouſands in its ruins. And this, I think, may be called the *natural death* of public credit: For to this period it tends as naturally as an animal body to its diſſolution and deſtruction *.

But

* So great dupes are the generality of mankind, that, notwithſtanding ſuch a violent ſhock to public credit, as a voluntary bankruptcy in England

Theſe two events, ſuppoſed above, are calamitous, but not the moſt calamitous. Thouſands are hereby ſacrificed to the ſafety of millions. But we are not without danger, that the contrary event may take place, and that millions may be ſacrificed for ever to the temporary ſafety of thouſands †. Our popular government, perhaps, will render it difficult or dangerous for a miniſter to

LAND would occaſion, it would not probably be long, ere credit would again revive in as flouriſhing a condition as before. The preſent king of FRANCE, during the late war, borrowed money at lower intereſt than ever his grandfather did; and as low as the BRITISH parliament, comparing the natural rate of intereſt in both kingdoms. And tho' men are commonly more governed by what they have ſeen, than by what thay foreſee, with whatever certainty; yet promiſes, proteſtations, fair appearances, with the allurements of preſent intereſt, have ſuch powerful influence as few are able to reſiſt. Mankind are, in all ages, caught by the ſame baits: The ſame tricks, played over and over again, ſtill trepan them. The heights of popularity and patriotiſm are ſtill the beaten road to power and tyranny; flattery to treachery; ſtanding armies to arbitrary government; and the glory of God to the temporal intereſt of the clergy. The fear of an everlaſting deſtruction of credit, allowing it to be an evil, is a needleſs bugbear. A prudent man, in reality, would rather lend to the public immediately after they had taken a ſpunge to their debts, as at preſent; as much as an opulent knave, even tho' one could not force him to pay, is a preferable debtor to an honeſt bankrupt: For the former, in order to carry on buſineſs, may find it his intereſt to diſcharge his debts, where they are not exorbitant: The latter has it not in his power. The reaſoning of TACITUS, *Hiſt. lib.* 3. as it is eternally true, is very applicable to our preſent caſe. *Sed vulgus ad magnitudinem beneficiorum aderat: Stultiſſimus quiſque pecuniis mercabatur: Apud ſapientes caſſa habebantur, quæ neque dari neque accipi, ſalva republica, poterant.* The public is a debtor, whom no man can oblige to pay. The only check which the creditors have on it, is the intereſt of preſerving credit; an intereſt, which may eaſily be overbalanced by a very great debt, and by a difficult and extraordinary emergence, even ſuppoſing that credit irrecoverable. Not to mention, that a preſent neceſſity often forces ſtates into meaſures which are, ſtrictly ſpeaking, againſt their intereſt

† I have heard it has been computed, that all the creditors of the public, natives and foreigners, amount only to 17,000. Theſe make a figure at preſent on their income; but, in caſe of a public bankruptcy, would, in an inſtant, become the loweſt, as well as the moſt wretched of the people. The dignity and authority of the landed gentry and nobility is much better rooted;

to venture on ſo deſperate an expedient, as that of a voluntary bankruptcy. And tho' the houſe of Lords be altogether compoſed of the proprietors of lands, and the houſe of Commons chiefly; and conſequently neither of them can be ſuppoſed to have great property in the funds: Yet the connections of the members may be ſo great with the proprietors, as to render them more tenacious of public faith, than prudence, policy, or even juſtice, ſtrictly ſpeaking, requires. And perhaps, too, our foreign enemies, or rather enemy (for we have but one to dread) may be ſo politic as to diſcover, that our ſafety lies in deſpair, and may not, therefore, ſhow the danger, open and barefaced, till it be inevitable. The balance of power in EUROPE, our grandfathers, our fathers, and we, have all juſtly eſteemed too unequal to be preſerved without our attention and aſſiſtance. But our children, weary with the ſtruggle, and fettered with incumbrances, may ſit down ſecure, and ſee their neighbours oppreſſed and conquered; till, at laſt, they themſelves and their creditors lie both at the mercy of the conqueror. And this may properly enough be denominated the *violent death* of our public credit.

Theſe ſeem to be the events which are not very remote, and which reaſon foreſees as clearly almoſt as ſhe can do any thing that lies in the womb of time. And tho' the antients maintained that, in order to reach the gift of prophecy, a certain divine fury or madneſs was

rooted; and would render the contention very unequal, if ever we come to that extremity. One would incline to aſſign to this event a very near period, ſuch as half a century, had not our fathers' prophecies of this kind been already found fallacious, by the duration of our public credit, ſo much beyond all reaſonable expectation. When the aſtrologers in FRANCE were every year foretelling the death of HENRY IV. *Theſe follows*, ſays he, *muſt be right at laſt.* We ſhall, therefore, be more cautious than to aſſign any preciſe date; and ſhall content ourſelves with pointing out the event in general.

requisite, one may safely affirm, that, in order to deliver such prophecies as these, no more is necessary, than merely to be in one's senses, free from the influence of popular madness and delusion.

ESSAY X.

Of some Remarkable Customs.

I Shall obſerve three remarkable cuſtoms in three celebrated governments; and ſhall conclude from the whole, that all general maxims in politics ought to be eſtabliſhed with great reſerve; and that irregular and extraordinary appearances are frequently diſcovered in the moral, as well as in the phyſical world. The former, perhaps, we can better account for, after they happen, from ſprings and principles, of which every one has, within himſelf, or from obvious obſervation, the ſtrongeſt aſſurance and conviction: But 'tis often fully as impoſſible for human prudence, beforehand, to foreſee, and foretel them.

I. One would think it eſſential to every ſupreme council or aſſembly, which debates, that intire liberty of ſpeech ſhould be granted to every member, and that all motions or reaſonings ſhould be received, which can any way tend to illuſtrate the point under deliberation. One would conclude, with ſtill greater aſſurance, that, after a motion was made, which was voted and approved by that aſſembly in which the legiſlative power is lodged, the member who made the motion muſt for ever be exempted from farther trial or inquiry. But no political maxim can, at firſt ſight, appear more undiſputable, than that he muſt, at leaſt, be ſecured from all inferior juriſdiction; and that nothing leſs than the ſame ſupreme legiſlative

assembly, in their subsequent meetings, could render him accountable for those motions and harangues which they had before approved of. But these axioms, however irrefragable they may appear, have all failed in the ATHENIAN government, from causes and principles too, which appear almost inevitable.

By the γραφη παρανομων, or *indictment of illegality*, (tho' it has not been remarked by antiquaries or commentators) any man was tried and punished in a common court of judicature, for any law which had passed upon his motion, in the assembly of the people, if that law appeared to the court unjust, or prejudicial to the public. Thus DEMOSTHENES, finding that ship-money was levied irregularly, and that the poor bore the same burden as the rich in equipping the gallies, corrected this inequality by a very useful law, which proportioned the expence to the revenue and income of each individual. He moved for this law in the assembly; he proved its advantages *; he convinced the people, the only legislature in ATHENS; the law passed, and was carried into execution: And yet he was tried in a criminal court for that law, upon the complaint of the rich, who resented the alteration he had introduced into the finances †. He was indeed acquitted, upon proving anew the usefulness of his law.

CTESIPHON moved in the assembly of the people, that particular honours should be conferred on DEMOSTHENES, as on a citizen affectionate and useful to the commonwealth: The people, convinced of this truth, voted those honours: Yet was CTESIPHON tried by the γραφη παρανομων. It was asserted, among other topics, that DEMOSTHENES was not a good citizen, nor affectionate to the commonwealth: And the orator was called upon

* His harangue for it is still extant; περι Συμμοριων.

† Pro CTESIPHONTE.

to

to defend his friend, and consequently himself; which he executed by that sublime piece of eloquence, that has ever since been the admiration of mankind.

After the battle of Chæronea, a law was passed upon the motion of Hyperides, giving liberty to slaves, and inrolling them in the troops *. On account of this law, the orator was afterwards tried by the indictment above mentioned, and defended himself, among other topics, by that stroke celebrated by Plutarch and Longinus. *It was not I*, said he, *that moved for this law: It was the necessities of war; it was the battle of* Chæronea. The orations of Demosthenes abound with many instances of trials of this nature, and prove clearly, that nothing was more commonly practised.

The Athenian Democracy was such a tumultuary government, as we can scarce form a notion of in the present age of the world. The whole collective body of the people voted in every law, without any limitation of property, without any distinction of rank, without controul from any magistracy or senate †; and consequently without regard to order, justice, or prudence. The Athenians soon became sensible of the mischiefs attending this constitution: But being averse to the checking themselves by any rule or restriction, they resolved, at least, to check their demagogues or counsellors, by the fear of future punishment and inquiry. They accordingly instituted this remarkable law; a law esteemed so essential to their government, that Æschi-

* Plutarchus *in vitâ decem oratorum*. Demosthenes gives a different account of this law. *Contra* Aristogiton. *orat.* II. He says, That its purport was, to render the ατιμοι επιτιμοι, or to restore the privilege of bearing offices to those who had been declared incapable. Perhaps these were both clauses of the same law.

† The senate of the Bean was only a less numerous mob, chosen by lot from among the people; and their authority was not great.

NES insists on it as a known truth, that were it abolished or neglected, it were impossible for the Democracy to subsist *.

The people feared not any ill consequence to liberty from the authority of the criminal courts; because these were nothing but very numerous juries, chosen by lot from among the people. And they considered themselves justly as in a state of perpetual pupillage; where they had an authority, after they came to the use of reason, not only to retract and controul whatever had been determined, but to punish any guardian for measures which they had embraced by his persuasion. The same law had place in THEBES †; and for the same reason.

It appears to have been an usual practice in ATHENS, on the establishment of any law esteemed very useful or popular, to prohibit for ever its abrogation and repeal. Thus the demagogue, who diverted all the public revenues to the support of shows and spectacles, made it criminal so much as to move for a repeal of this law ‡. Thus LEPTINES moved for a law, not only to recal all the immunities formerly granted, but to deprive the people for the future of the power of granting any more ‖. Thus all bills of attainder ⸸ were forbid, or laws that affected one ATHENIAN, without extending to the whole commonwealth. These absurd clauses, by which the legislature vainly attempted to bind itself for ever, proceeded from an universal sense of the levity and inconstancy of the people.

* *In* CTESIPHONTEM. 'Tis remarkable, that the first step after the dissolution of the Democracy by CRITIAS and the Thirty, was to annul the γραφὴ παρανομων, as we learn from DEMOSTHENES κατὰ Τιμοκ. The orator in this oration gives us the words of the law, establishing the γραφὴ παρανομων, pag. 297. *ex edit.* ALDI. And he accounts for it, from the same principles we here reason upon.

† PLUT. *in vita* PELOP. ‡ DEMOST. *Olynth.* I. 2.

‖ DEMOST. *contra* LEPT. ⸸ DEMOST. *contra* ARISTOCRATEM.

II.

II. A wheel within a wheel, such as we observe in the German empire, is considered by Lord Shaftesbury * as an absurdity in politics: But what must we say to two equal wheels, which govern the same political machine, without any mutual check, controul, or subordination; and yet preserve the greatest harmony and concord? To establish two distinct legislatures, each of which possesses full and absolute authority within itself, and stands in no need of the other's assistance, in order to give validity to its acts; this may appear, beforehand, altogether impracticable, as long as men are actuated by the passions of ambition, emulation, and avarice, which have been hitherto their chief governing principles. And should I assert, that the state I have in my eye was divided into two distinct factions, each of which predominated in a distinct legislature, and yet produced no clashing in these independent powers; the supposition may appear almost incredible. And if, to augment the paradox, I should affirm, that this disjointed, irregular government, was the most active, triumphant, and illustrious commonwealth, that ever yet appeared on the stage of the world; I should certainly be told, that such a political chimera was as absurd as any vision of the poets. But there is no need for searching long, in order to prove the reality of the foregoing suppositions: For this was actually the case with the Roman republic.

The legislative power was there lodged within the *comitia centuriata* and *comitia tributa*. In the former, 'tis well known, the people voted according to their *census*; so that when the first class was unanimous, tho' it contained not, perhaps, the hundredth part of the commonwealth, it determined the whole; and, with the authority of the senate, established a law. In the latter, every vote was alike; and as the authority of the senate was not there

* Essay on the freedom of wit and humour, part 3. § 2.

requiſite, the lower people entirely prevailed, and gave law to the whole ſtate. In all party-diviſions, at firſt between the PATRICIANS and PLEBEIANS, afterwards between the nobles and the people, the intereſt of the Ariſtocracy was predominant in the firſt legiſlature; that of the Democracy in the ſecond: The one could always deſtroy what the other had eſtabliſhed: Nay, the one, by a ſudden and unforeſeen motion, might take the ſtart of the other, and totally annihilate its rival, by a vote, which, from the nature of the conſtitution, had the full authority of a law. But no ſuch conteſt or ſtruggle is obſerved in the hiſtory of ROME: No inſtance of a quarrel between theſe two legiſlatures; tho' many between the parties that governed in each. Whence aroſe this concord, which may ſeem ſo extraordinary?

The legiſlature eſtabliſhed at ROME, by the authority of SERVIUS TULLIUS, was the *comitia centuriata*, which, after the expulſion of the kings, rendered the government, for ſome time, altogether ariſtocratical. But the people, having numbers and force on their ſide, and being elated with frequent conqueſts and victories in their foreign wars, always prevailed when puſhed to extremities, and firſt extorted from the ſenate the magiſtracy of the tribunes, and then the legiſlative power of the *comitia tributa*. It then behoved the nobles to be more careful than ever not to provoke the people. For beſide the force which the latter were always poſſeſſed of, they had now got poſſeſſion of legal authority, and could inſtantly break in pieces any order or inſtitution which directly oppoſed them. By intrigue, by influence, by money, by combination, and by the reſpect paid their character, the nobles might often prevail, and direct the whole machine of government: But had they openly ſet their *comitia centuriata* in oppoſition to the *tributa*, they had ſoon loſt the advantage of that inſtitution, together with their conſuls, prætors, ediles, and all the magiſtrates elected

elected by it. But the *comitia tributa*, not having the same reason for respecting the *centuriata*, frequently repealed laws favourable to the Aristocracy: They limited the authority of the nobles, protected the people from oppression, and controlled the actions of the senate and magistracy. The *centuriata* found it convenient always to submit; and tho' equal in authority, yet being inferior in power, durst never directly give any shock to the other legislature, either by repealing its laws, or establishing laws, which, it foresaw, would soon be repealed by it.

No instance is found of any opposition or struggle between these *comitia*; except one slight attempt of this kind, mentioned by Appian in the third book of his civil wars. Mark Anthony, resolving to deprive Decimus Brutus of the government of Cisalpine Gaul, railed in the *Forum*, and called one of the *comitia*, in order to prevent the meeting of the other, which had been ordered by the senate. But affairs were then fallen into such confusion, and the Roman constitution was so near its final dissolution, that no inference can be drawn from such an expedient. This contest, besides, was founded more on form than party. It was the senate who ordered the *comitia tributa*, that they might obstruct the meeting of the *centuriata*, which, by the constitution, or at least forms of the government, could alone dispose of provinces.

Cicero was recalled by the *comitia centuriata*, tho' banished by the *tributa*, that is, by a *plebiscitum*. But his banishment, we may observe, never was considered as a legal deed, arising from the free choice and inclination of the people. It was always ascribed to the violence alone of Clodius, and to the disorders introduced by him into the government.

III. The *third* cuſtom which we propoſed to obſerve, regards ENGLAND; and tho' it be not ſo important as thoſe which we have pointed out in ATHENS and ROME, it is no leſs ſingular and remarkable. 'Tis a maxim in politics, which we readily admit as undiſputed and univerſal, That a power, however great, when granted by law to an eminent magiſtrate, is not ſo dangerous to liberty, as an authority, however inconſiderable, which he acquires from violence and uſurpation. For, beſides that the law always limits every power which it beſtows, the very receiving it as a conceſſion eſtabliſhes the authority whence it is derived, and preſerves the harmony of the conſtitution. By the ſame right that one prerogative is aſſumed without law, another may alſo be claimed, and another, with ſtill greater facility; while the firſt uſurpations both ſerve as precedents to the following, and give force to maintain them. Hence the heroiſm of HAMPDEN, who ſuſtained the whole violence of royal proſecution, rather than pay a tax of twenty ſhillings not impoſed by parliament; hence the care of all ENGLISH patriots to guard againſt the firſt encroachments of the crown; and hence alone the exiſtence, at this day, of ENGLISH liberty.

There is, however, one occaſion, where the parliament has departed from this maxim; and that is, in the *preſſing of ſeamen*. The exerciſe of an illegal power is here tacitly permitted in the crown; and tho' it has frequently been under deliberation, how that power might be rendered legal, and granted, under proper reſtrictions to the ſovereign, no ſafe expedient could ever be propoſed for that purpoſe, and the danger to liberty always appeared greater from law than from uſurpation. While this power is exerciſed to no other end than to man the navy, men willingly ſubmit to it, from a ſenſe of its uſe and neceſſity; and the ſailors, who are alone af-

affected by it, find no body to support them, in claiming the rights and privileges which the law grants, without distinction, to all English subjects. But were this power, on any occasion, made an instrument of faction or ministerial tyranny, the opposite faction, and indeed all lovers of their country, would immediately take the alarm, and support the injured party; the liberty of Englishmen would be asserted; juries would be implacable; and the tools of tyranny, acting both against law and equity, would meet with the severest vengeance. On the other hand, were the parliament to grant such an authority, they would probably fall into one of these two inconveniencies: They would either bestow it under so many restrictions as would make it lose its effects, by cramping the authority of the crown; or they would render it so large and comprehensive, as might give occasion to great abuses, for which we could, in that case, have no remedy. The very illegality of the power, at present, prevents its abuses, by affording so easy a remedy against them.

I pretend not, by this reasoning, to exclude all possibility of contriving a register for seamen, which might man the navy, without being dangerous to liberty. I only observe, that no satisfactory scheme of that nature has yet been proposed. Rather than adopt any project hitherto invented, we continue a practice seemingly the most absurd and unaccountable. Authority, in times of full internal peace and concord, is armed against law. A continued and open usurpation in the crown is permitted, amidst the greatest jealousy and watchfulness in the people; nay proceeding from those very principles: Liberty, in a country, of the highest liberty, is left intirely to its own defence, without any countenance or protection: The wild state of nature is renewed, in one of the most civilized societies of mankind: And great vio-

violences and diſorders among the people, the moſt humane and the beſt natured, are committed with impunity; while the one party pleads obedience to the ſupreme magiſtrate, the other the ſanction of fundamental laws.

ESSAY

ESSAY XI.

Of the POPULOUSNESS of ANTIENT NATIONS*.

THERE is very little ground, either from reaſon or experience, to conclude the univerſe eternal or incorruptible. The continual and rapid motion of matter, the violent revolutions with which every part is agitated, the changes remarked in the heavens, the plain traces as well as tradition of an univerſal deluge, or general convulſion of the elements; all theſe prove ſtrongly the mortality of this fabric of the world, and its paſſage, by corruption or diſſolution, from one ſtate or order to another. It muſt, therefore, as well as each individual form which it contains, have its infancy, youth, manhood, and old

* An ingenious writer has honoured this diſcourſe with an anſwer, full of politeneſs, erudition, and good ſenſe. So learned a refutation would have made the author ſuſpect, that his reaſonings were entirely overthrown, had he not uſed the precaution, from the beginning, to keep himſelf on the ſceptical ſide; and having taken this advantage of the ground, he was enabled, tho' with much inferior forces, to preſerve himſelf from a total defeat. That Reverend gentleman will always find, where his antagoniſt is ſo entrenched, that it will be difficult to force him. VARRO, in ſuch a ſituation, could defend himſelf againſt HANNIBAL, PHARNACES againſt CÆSAR. The author, however, very willingly acknowledges, that his antagoniſt has detected many miſtakes both in his authorities and reaſonings; and it was owing entirely to that gentleman's indulgence, that many more errors were not remarked. In this edition, advantage has been taken of his learned animadverſions, and the Eſſay has been rendered leſs imperfect than formerly.

age;

age; and 'tis probable, that in all these variations, man, equally with every animal and vegetable, will partake. In the flourishing age of the world, it may be expected, that the human species should possess greater vigour both of mind and body, more prosperous health, higher spirits, longer life, and a stronger inclination and power of generation. But if the general system of things, and human society of course, have any such gradual revolutions, they are too slow to be discernible in that short period which is comprehended by history and tradition. Stature and force of body, length of life, even courage and extent of genius, seem hitherto to have been, naturally in all ages, pretty much the same. The arts and sciences, indeed, have flourished in one period, and have decayed in another: But we may observe, that at the time when they rose to greatest perfection among one people, they were perhaps totally unknown to all the neighbouring nations; and tho' they universally decayed in one age, yet in a succeeding generation they again revived, and diffused themselves over the world. As far, therefore, as observation reaches, there is no universal difference discernible in the human species; and though it were allowed, that the universe, like an animal body, had a natural progress from infancy to old age; yet as it must still be uncertain whether, at present, it be advancing to its point of perfection, or declining from it, we cannot thence presuppose any decay in human nature *. To prove, therefore, or account for the greater populousness of antiquity, by the imaginary youth or vigour of the

* COLUMELLA says, lib. 3. cap. 8. that in ÆGYPT and AFRICA the bearing of twins was frequent, and even customary; *gemini partus familiares; ac pæne solennes sunt.* If this was true, there is a physical difference both in countries and ages. For travellers make no such remarks of these countries at present. On the contrary, we are apt to suppose the northern nations more fertile. As these two countries were provinces of the ROMAN empire, 'tis difficult, though not altogether absurd, to suppose that such a man as COLUMELLA might be mistaken with regard to them.

world,

world will ſcarce be admitted by any juſt reaſoner. Theſe *general phyſical* cauſes ought entirely to be excluded from that queſtion.

There are indeed ſome more *particular phyſical* cauſes of great importance. Diſeaſes are mentioned in antiquity, which are almoſt unknown to modern medicine; and new diſeaſes have ariſen and propagated themſelves, of which there are no traces in antient hiſtory. And in this particular we may obſerve, upon compariſon, that the diſadvantage is very much on the ſide of the moderns. Not to mention ſome others of leſs importance; the ſmall-pox commits ſuch ravages, as would almoſt alone account for the great ſuperiority aſcribed to antient times. The tenth or the twelfth part of mankind, deſtroyed every generation, ſhould make a vaſt difference, it may be thought in the numbers of the people; and when joined to venereal diſtempers, a new plague diffuſed every where, this diſeaſe is perhaps equivalent, by its conſtant operation, to the three great ſcourges of mankind, war, peſtilence, and famine. Were it certain, therefore, that antient times, were more populous than the preſent, and could no moral cauſes be aſſigned for ſo great a change; theſe phyſical cauſes alone, in the opinion of many, would be ſufficient to give us ſatisfaction on that head.

But is it certain, that antiquity was ſo much more populous as is pretended? The extravagancies of VOSSIUS, with regard to this ſubject, are well known. But an author of much greater genius and diſcernment has ventured to affirm, that, according to the beſt computations which theſe ſubjects will admit of, there are not now, on the face of the earth, the fiftieth part of mankind, which exiſted in the time of JULIUS CÆSAR *. It may eaſily be obſerved, that the compariſons, in this caſe,

* *Lettres* PERSANES. See alſo *L'Eſprit de Loix*, liv. 23. cap. 17, 18, 19.

muſt

muſt be very imperfect, even though we confine ourſelves to the ſcene of antient hiſtory; EUROPE, and the nations about the MEDITERRANEAN. We know not exactly the numbers of any EUROPEAN kingdom, or even city, at preſent: How can we pretend to calculate thoſe of antient cities and ſtates, where hiſtorians have left us ſuch imperfect traces? For my part, the matter appears to me ſo uncertain, that, as I intend to throw together ſome reflections on that head, I ſhall intermingle the inquiry concerning *cauſes* with that concerning *facts*; which ought never to be admitted, where the facts can be aſcertained with any tolerable aſſurance. We ſhall, *firſt*, conſider whether it be probable, from what we know of the ſituation of ſociety in both periods, that antiquity muſt have been more populous; *ſecondly*, whether in reality it was ſo. If I can make it appear, that the concluſion is not ſo certain as is pretended, in favour of antiquity, 'tis all I aſpire to.

In general, we may obſerve, that the queſtion with regard to the comparative populouſneſs of ages or kingdoms implies very important conſequences, and commonly determines concerning the preference of their whole police, their manners, and the conſtitution of their government. For as there is in all men, both male and female, a deſire and power of generation, more active than is ever univerſally exerted, the reſtraints which they lie under, muſt proceed from ſome difficulties in their ſituation, which it belongs to a wiſe legiſlature carefully to obſerve and remove. Almoſt every man who thinks he can maintain a family will have one; and the human ſpecies, at this rate of propagation, would more than double every generation. How faſt do mankind multiply in every colony or new ſettlement; where it is an eaſy matter to provide for a family; and where men are nowiſe ſtraitened or confined, as in long eſtabliſhed governments?

vernments? Hiſtory tells us frequently of plagues, which have ſwept away the third or fourth part of a people: Yet in a generation or two, the deſtruction was not perceived; and the ſociety had again acquired their former number. The lands which were cultivated, the houſes built, the commodities raiſed, the riches acquired, enabled the people who eſcaped, immediately to marry, and to rear families, which ſupplied the place of thoſe who had periſhed *. And for a like reaſon, every wiſe, juſt, and mild government, by rendering the condition of its ſubjects eaſy and ſecure, will always abound moſt in people, as well as in commodities and riches. A country, indeed, whoſe climate and ſoil are fitted for vines, will naturally be more populous than one which produces only corn, and that more populous than one which is only fitted for paſturage. But if every thing elſe be equal, it ſeems natural to expect, that where-ever there are moſt happineſs and virtue, and the wiſeſt inſtitutions, there will alſo be moſt people.

The queſtion, therefore, concerning the populouſneſs of antient and modern times, being allowed of great importance, it will be requiſite, if we would bring it to ſome determination, to compare both the *domeſtic* and *political* ſituation of theſe two periods, in order to judge of the facts by their moral cauſes; which is the *firſt* view in which we propoſed to conſider them.

The chief difference between the *domeſtic* œconomy of the ancients and that of the moderns conſiſts in the practice of ſlavery, which prevailed among the former,

* This too is a good reaſon why the ſmall-pox does not depopulate countries ſo much as may at firſt ſight be imagined. Where there is room for more people, they will always ariſe, even without the aſſiſtance of naturalization-bills. 'Tis remarked by Don GERONIMO DE USTARIZ, that the provinces of SPAIN which ſend moſt people to the INDIES, are moſt populous; which proceeds from their ſuperior riches.

and

and which has been abolished for some centuries throughout the greatest part of EUROPE. Some passionate admirers of the antients, and zealous partizans of civil liberty, (for these sentiments, as they are both of them, in the main, extremely just, are found to be almost inseparable) cannot forbear regretting the loss of this institution; and whilst they brand all submission to the government of a single person with the harsh denomination of slavery, they would gladly reduce the greatest part of mankind to real slavery and subjection. But to one who considers coolly on the subject, it will appear, that human nature, in general, really enjoys more liberty at present, in the most arbitrary government of EUROPE, than it ever did during the most flourishing period of antient times. As much as submission to a petty prince, whose dominions extend not beyond a single city, is more grievous than obedience to a great monarch; so much is domestic slavery more cruel and oppressive than any civil subjection whatsoever. The more the master is removed from us in place and rank, the greater liberty we enjoy; the less are our actions inspected and controled; and the fainter that cruel comparison becomes between our own subjection, and the freedom, and even dominion of another. The remains that are found of domestic slavery, in the AMERICAN colonies, and among some EUROPEAN nations, would never surely create a desire of rendering it more universal. The little humanity commonly observed in persons accustomed, from their infancy, to exercise so great authority over their fellow-creatures, and to trample upon human nature, were sufficient alone to disgust us with that authority. Nor can a more probable reason be given for the severe, I might say, barbarous, manners of antient times, than the practice of domestic slavery; by which every man of rank was rendered a petty tyrant, and educated amidst the flattery, submission, and low debasement of his slaves.

According to the antient practice, all checks were on the inferior, to reſtrain him to the duty of ſubmiſſion; none on the ſuperior, to engage him to the reciprocal duties of gentleneſs and humanity. In modern times, a bad ſervant finds not eaſily a good maſter, nor a bad maſter a good ſervant; and the checks are mutual, ſuitable to the inviolable and eternal laws of reaſon and equity.

The cuſtom of expoſing old, uſeleſs, or ſick ſlaves in an iſland of the TYBER, there to ſtarve, ſeems to have been pretty common in ROME; and whoever recovered, after having been ſo expoſed, had his liberty given him, by an edict of the emperor CLAUDIUS; where it was likewiſe forbid to kill any ſlave merely for old age or ſickneſs *: But ſuppoſing that this edict was ſtrictly obeyed, would it better the domeſtic treatment of ſlaves, or render their lives much more comfortable? We may imagine what others would practiſe, when it was the profeſſed maxim of the elder CATO, to ſell his ſuperannuated ſlaves for any price, rather than maintain what he eſteemed an uſeleſs burthen †.

The *ergaſtula*, or dungeons, where ſlaves in chains were forced to work, were very common all over ITALY. COLUMELLA ‡ adviſes, that they be always built under ground; and recommends ‖ it as the duty of a careful overſeer, to call over every day the names of theſe ſlaves, like the muſtering of a regiment or ſhip's company, in order to know preſently when any of them had deſerted. A proof of the frequency of theſe *ergaſtula*, and of the great number of ſlaves uſually confined in them.

A chained ſlave for a porter was uſual in ROME, as appears from OVID ⸸, and other authors §. Had not theſe

* SUETONIUS in vita CLAUDII. † PLUT. in vita CATONIS.
‡ Lib. 1. cap. 6. ‖ Id. lib. 11. cap. 1. ⸸ Amor. lib. 1. eleg. 6.
§ SUETON. *de claris rhetor.* So alſo the antient poet. *Janitoris tintinnire impedimenta audio.*

people ſhaken off all ſenſe of compaſſion towards that unhappy part of their ſpecies, would they have preſented all their friends, at the firſt entrance, with ſuch an image of the ſeverity of the maſter, and miſery of the ſlave?

Nothing ſo common in all trials, even of civil cauſes, as to call for the evidence of ſlaves; which was always extorted by the moſt exquiſite torments. DEMOSTHENES ſays *, that where it was poſſible to produce, for the ſame fact, either freemen or ſlaves as witneſſes, the judges always preferred the torturing of ſlaves, as a more certain and infallible evidence †.

SENECA draws a picture of that diſorderly luxury, which changes day into night, and night into day, and inverts every ſtated hour of every office in life. Among other circumſtances, ſuch as diſplacing the meals and times of bathing, he mentions, that regularly about the third hour of the night, the neighbours of one who indulges this falſe refinement, hear the noiſe of whips and laſhes; and, upon inquiry, find that he is then taking an account of the conduct of his ſervants, and giving them due correction and diſcipline. This is not remarked as an inſtance of cruelty, but only of diſorder, which, even in actions the moſt uſual and methodical, changes the fixed hours that an eſtabliſhed cuſtom had aſſigned them ‡.

But

* In *Onitorem orat.* 1.

† The ſame practice was common in ROME; but CICERO ſeems not to think this evidence ſo certain as the teſtimony of free-citizens. *Pro Cælio.*

‡ *Epiſt.* 122. The inhuman ſports exhibited at ROME, may juſtly be conſidered too as an effect of the people's contempt for ſlaves, and was alſo a great cauſe of the general inhumanity of their princes and rulers. Who can read the accounts of the amphitheatrical entertainments without horror? Or who is ſurprized, that the emperors ſhould treat that people in the ſame way the people treated their inferiors? One's humanity, on that occaſion,

But our preſent buſineſs is only to conſider the influence of ſlavery on the populouſneſs of a ſtate. 'Tis pretended, that, in this particular, the antient practice had infinitely the advantage, and was the chief cauſe of that extreme populouſneſs which is ſuppoſed in thoſe times. At preſent, all maſters diſcourage the marrying of their male ſervants, and admit not by any means the marriage of the female, who are then ſuppoſed altogether incapacitated for their ſervice. But where the property of the ſervants is lodged in the maſter, their marriage and fertility form his riches, and bring him a ſucceſſion of ſlaves, that ſupply the place of thoſe whom age and infirmity have diſabled. He encourages, therefore, their propagation as much as that of his cattle; rears the young with the ſame care; and educates them to ſome art or calling, which may render them more uſeful or valuable to him. The opulent are, by this policy, intereſted in the being at leaſt, though not the well-being of the poor; and enrich themſelves, by increaſing the number and induſtry of thoſe who are ſubjected to them. Each man, being a ſovereign in his own family, has the ſame intereſt with regard to it, as the prince with regard to the ſtate; and has not, like the prince, any oppoſite motives of ambition or vain-glory, which may lead him to depopulate his little ſovereignty. All of it is, at all times, under his eye; and he has leiſure to inſpect the

caſion, is apt to renew the barbarous wiſh of CALIGULA, that the people had but one neck. A man could almoſt be pleaſed, by a ſingle blow, to put an end to ſuch a race of monſters. You may thank God, ſays the author above cited, *(epiſt. 7.)* addreſſing himſelf to the ROMAN people, that you have a maſter, *(viz.* the mild and merciful NERO) who is incapable of learning cruelty from your example. This was ſpoke in the beginning of his reign: But he fitted them very well afterwards; and no doubt was conſiderably improved by the ſight of the barbarous objects, to which he had, from his infancy, been accuſtomed.

moſt minute detail of the marriage and education of his ſubjects †.

Such are the conſequences of domeſtic ſlavery, according to the firſt aſpect and appearance of things: But if we enter more deeply into the ſubject, we ſhall perhaps find reaſon to retract our haſty determinations. The compariſon is ſhocking between the management of human creatures and that of cattle; but being extremely juſt, when applied to the preſent ſubject, it may be proper to trace the conſequences of it. At the capital, near all great cities, in all populous, rich, induſtrious provinces, few cattle are bred. Proviſions, lodging, attendance, labour, are there dear; and men find better their account in buying the cattle, after they come to a certain age, from the remoter and cheaper countries. Theſe are conſequently the only breeding countries for cattle; and by a parity of reaſon, for men too, when the latter are put on the ſame footing with the former. To rear a child in LONDON till he could be ſerviceable, would coſt much dearer, than to buy one of the ſame age from SCOTLAND or IRELAND; where he had been raiſed in a cottage, covered with rags, and fed on oatmeal or potatoes. Thoſe who had ſlaves, therefore, in all the richer and more populous countries, would diſcourage the pregnancy of the females, and either prevent or deſtroy the birth. The human ſpecies would periſh in thoſe places where it ought to increaſe the faſteſt; and a perpetual recruit be needed from all the poorer and more deſart provinces. Such a continued drain would tend

† We may here obſerve, that if domeſtic ſlavery really increaſed populouſneſs, it would be an exception to the general rule, that the happineſs of any ſociety and its populouſneſs are neceſſary attendants. A maſter, from humour or intereſt, may make his ſlaves very unhappy, and yet be careful, from intereſt, to increaſe their number. Their marriage is not a matter of choice with them, no more than any other action of their life.

mightily

mightily to depopulate the ſtate, and render great cities ten times more deſtructive than with us; where every man is maſter of himſelf, and provides for his children from the powerful inſtinct of nature, not the calculations of ſordid intereſt. If LONDON, at preſent, without much increaſing, needs a yearly recruit from the country, of 5000 people, as is commonly computed; what muſt it require, if the greateſt part of the tradeſmen and common people were ſlaves, and were hindered from breeding by their avaricious maſters?

All antient authors tell us, that there was a perpetual flux of ſlaves to ITALY from the remoter provinces, particularly SYRIA, CILICIA *, CAPPADOCIA, and the Leſſer ASIA, THRACE, and ÆGYPT: Yet the number of people did not increaſe in ITALY; and writers complain of the continual decay of induſtry and agriculture †. Where then is that extreme fertility of the ROMAN ſlaves, which is commonly ſuppoſed? So far from multiplying, they could not, it ſeems, ſo much as keep up the ſtock, without immenſe recruits. And tho' great numbers were continually manumitted, and converted into ROMAN citizens, the numbers even of theſe did not increaſe ‡, till the freedom of the city was communicated to foreign provinces.

The term for a ſlave born and bred in the family, was *verna* ‖; and theſe ſlaves ſeem to have been intitled by cuſtom

* Ten thouſand ſlaves in a day have been often ſold for the uſe of the ROMANS, at DELUS in CILICIA. STRABO, lib. 14.

† COLUMELLA, lib. 1. *proœm.* et cap. 2. et 7. VARRO, lib. 3. cap 1. HORAT. lib. 2. od. 15. TACIT. *annal.* lib. 3. cap. 54. SUETON. *in vita* AUG. cap. 42. PLIN. lib. 18 cap. 13.

‡ *Minore indies plebe ingenua*, ſays TACITUS, *ann.* lib. 14. cap. 7.

‖ As *ſervus* was the name of the genus, and *verna* of the ſpecies, without any correlative, this forms a ſtrong preſumption, that the latter were

cuſtom to privileges and indulgences beyond others; a ſufficient reaſon why the maſters would not be fond of rearing many of that kind*. Whoever is acquainted with the maxims of our planters, will acknowledge the juſtneſs of this obſervation †.

ATTICUS is much praiſed by his hiſtorian for the care which he took in recruiting his family from the ſlaves

by far the leaſt numerous. 'Tis an univerſal obſervation which we may form upon language, that where two related parts of a whole bear any proportion to each other, in numbers, rank or conſideration, there are always correlative terms invented, which anſwer to both the parts, and expreſs their mutual relation. If they bear no proportion to each other, the term is only invented for the leſs, and marks its diſtinction from the whole. Thus *man* and *woman*, *maſter* and *ſervant*, *father* and *ſon*, *prince* and *ſubject*, *ſtranger* and *citizen*, are correlative terms. But the words, *ſeaman*, *carpenter*, *ſmith*, *tailor*, &c. have no correſpondent terms, which expreſs thoſe who are no ſeaman, no carpenter, &c. Languages differ very much with regard to the particular words where this diſtinction obtains; and may thence afford very ſtrong inferences, concerning the manners and cuſtoms of different nations. The military government of the ROMAN emperors had exalted the ſoldiery ſo high, that they balanced all the other orders of the ſtate: Hence *miles* and *paganus* became relative terms; a thing, till then, unknown to ancient, and ſtill ſo to modern languages. Modern ſuperſtition exalted the clergy ſo high, that they overbalanced the whole ſtate: Hence *clergy* and *laity* are terms oppoſed in all modern languages; and in theſe alone. And from the ſame principles I infer, that if the number of ſlaves bought by the ROMANS from foreign countries, had not extremely exceeded thoſe bred at home, *verna* would have had a correlative, which would have expreſſed the former ſpecies of ſlaves. But theſe, it would ſeem, compoſed the main body of the antient ſlaves, and the latter were but a few exceptions.

* *Verna* is uſed by ROMAN writers as a word equivalent to *ſcurra*, on account of the petulance and impudence of thoſe ſlaves. MART. lib. 1. ep. 42. HORACE alſo mentions the *vernæ procaces*; and PETRONIUS, cap. 24. *vernula urbanitas*. SENECA, *de provid.* cap. 1. *vernularum licentia*.

† 'Tis computed in the WEST INDIES, that a ſtock of ſlaves grow worſe five *per cent.* every year, unleſs new ſlaves be bought to recruit them. They are not able to keep up their number, even in thoſe warm countries, where cloaths and proviſions are ſo eaſily got. How much more muſt this happen in EUROPEAN countries, and in or near great cities?

born

born in it *: May we not thence infer, that that practice was not then very common?

The names of ſlaves in the GREEK comedies, SYRUS, MYSUS, GETA, THRAX, DAVUS, LYDUS, PHRYX, &c. afford a preſumption, that at ATHENS, at leaſt, moſt of the ſlaves were imported from foreign nations. The ATHENIANS, ſays STRABO †, gave to their ſlaves, either the names of the nations whence they were bought, as LYDUS, SYRUS; or the names that were moſt common among thoſe nations, as MANES or MIDAS to a PHRYGIAN, TIBIAS to a PAPHLAGONIAN.

DEMOSTHENES, after having mentioned a law which forbid any man to ſtrike the ſlave of another, praiſes the humanity of this law; and adds that if the barbarians from whom ſlaves were bought had information that their countrymen met with ſuch gentle treatment, they would entertain a great eſteem for the ATHENIANS ‡. ISOCRATES ⸸ too inſinuates, that the ſlaves of the GREEKS were generally or very commonly barbarians. ARISTOTLE in his Politics ‖ plainly ſuppoſes, that a ſlave is always a foreigner. The antient comic writers repreſented the ſlaves as ſpeaking a barbarous language §. This was an imitation of nature.

'Tis well known that DEMOSTHENES, in his nonage, had been defrauded of a large fortune by his tutors, and that afterwards he recovered, by a proſecution at law, the value of his patrimony. His orations, on that occaſion, ſtill remain, and contain a very exact detail of

* CORN. NEPOS in vita ATTICI. We may remark, that ATTICUS's eſtate lay chiefly in EPIRUS, which being a remote, deſolate place, would renſſier it profitable for him to rear ſlaves there.

† Lib. 7. ‡ In MIDIAM, p. 221. ex edit. ALDI. ⸸ Panegyr.
‖ Lib. 7. cap. 10. ſub fin.

§ ARISTOPH. Equites, l. 17. The antient ſcholiaſt remarks on this paſſage βαρβαριζει ως δουλος.

the whole ſubſtance left by his father *, in money, merchandiſe, houſes, and ſlaves, together with the value of each particular. Among the reſt were 52 ſlaves, handicraftſmen, *viz.* 32 ſword-cutlers, and 20 cabinet makers †; all males; not a word of any wives, children, or family, which they certainly would have had, had it been a common cuſtom at ATHENS to breed from the ſlaves: And the value of the whole muſt have depended very much on that circumſtance. No female ſlaves are even ſo much as mentioned, except ſome houſe-maids, who belonged to his mother. This argument has great force, if it be not altogether deciſive.

Conſider this paſſage of PLUTARCH ‡, ſpeaking of the Elder CATO. "He had a great number of ſlaves, whom "he took care to buy at the ſales of priſoners of war; "and he choſe them young, that they might eaſily be "accuſtomed to any diet or manner of life, and be in"ſtructed in any buſineſs or labour, as men teach any "thing to young dogs or horſes. —— And eſteeming "love the chief ſource of all diſorders, he allowed the "male ſlaves to have a commerce with the female in his "family, upon paying a certain ſum for this privilege: "But he ſtrictly forbad all intrigues out of his family." Are there any ſymptoms in this narration of that care which is ſuppoſed in the antients, of the marriage and propagation of their ſlaves? If that was a common practice, founded on general intereſt, it would ſurely have been embraced by CATO, who was a great œconomiſt, and lived in times when the antient frugality and ſimplicity of manners were ſtill in credit and reputation.

It is expreſsly remarked by the writers of the ROMAN

* In *Amphobum orat.* 1.

† κλινοποιοι, makers of thoſe beds which the antients lay upon at meals.

‡ In vita CATONIS.

law,

law, that ſcarce any ever purchaſe ſlaves with a view of breeding from them *.

Our lackeys and houſe-maids, I own, do not ſerve much to multiply their ſpecies: But the antients, beſides thoſe who attended on their perſon, had all their labour performed by ſlaves, who lived, many of them, in their family; and ſome great men poſſeſſed to the number of 10,000. If there be any ſuſpicion, therefore, that this inſtitution was unfavourable to propagation, (and the ſame reaſon, at leaſt in part, holds with regard to antient ſlaves as well as modern ſervants) how deſtructive muſt ſlavery have proved?

Hiſtory mentions a ROMAN nobleman, who had 400 ſlaves under the ſame roof with him: And having been aſſaſſinated at home by the furious revenge of one of them, the law was executed with rigour, and all without exception were put to death †. Many other ROMAN noblemen had families equally, or more numerous;

* "Non temere ancillæ ejus rei cauſa comparantur ut pariant." *Digeſt.* lib. 5. tit. 3. *de hæred. petit. lex* 27. The following texts are to the ſame purpoſe. "Spadonem morboſum non eſſe, neque vitioſum, verius mihi videtur; "ſed ſanum eſſe, ſicuti illum qui unum teſticulum habet, qui etiam generare "poteſt." *Digeſt.* lib. 2. tit. 1. *de ædilitio edicto, lex* 6. § 2. "Sin autem "quis ita ſpado ſit, ut tam neceſſaria pars corporis penitus abſit, morboſus "eſt." *Id. lex* 7. His impotence, it ſeems, was only regarded ſo far as his health or life might be affected by it. In other reſpects, he was full as valuable. The ſame reaſoning is employed with regard to female ſlaves. "Quæritur de ea muliere quæ ſemper mortuos parit, an morboſa ſit? et "ait Sabinus, ſi vulvæ vitio hoc contingit, morboſam eſſe." *Id. lex* 14. It has even been doubted, whether a woman pregnant was morbid or vitiated; and it is determined, that ſhe is ſound, not on account of the value of her offſpring, but becauſe it is the natural part or office of women to bear children. "Si mulier prægnans venerit, inter omnes convenit ſanam eam eſſe. "Maximum enim ac præcipuum munus fœminarum accipere ac tueri con"ceptum. Puerperam quoque ſanam eſſe; ſi modo nihil extrinſecus acce"dit, quod corpus ejus in aliquam valetudinem immitteret. De ſterili "Cœlius diſtinguere Trebatium dicit, ut ſi natura ſterilis ſit, ſana ſit; ſi vi"tio corporis, contra." *Id.*

† TACIT. *ann.* lib. 14. cap. 43.

and

and I believe every one will allow, that this would ſcarce be practicable, were we to ſuppoſe all the ſlaves married, and the females to be breeders *.

So early as the poet HESIOD †, married ſlaves, whether male or female, were eſteemed very inconvenient. How much more, where families had increaſed to ſuch an enormous ſize, as in ROME, and where the antient ſimplicity of manners was baniſhed from all ranks of people?

XENOPHON in his Oeconomics, where he gives directions for the management of a farm, recommends a ſtrict care and attention of laying the male and the female ſlaves at a diſtance from each other. He ſeems not to ſuppoſe that they are ever married. The only ſlaves among the GREEKS that appear to have continued their own breed, were the HELOTES, who had houſes apart, and were more the ſlaves of the public than of individuals ‡.

The ſame author § tells us, that NICIAS's overſeer, by agreement with his maſter, was obliged to pay him an obolus a day for each ſlave; beſides maintaining them, and keeping up the number. Had the antient ſlaves been all breeders, this laſt circumſtance of the contract had been ſuperfluous.

The antients talk ſo frequently of a fixed, ſtated portion of proviſions aſſigned to each ſlave ‖, that we are naturally led to conclude, that ſlaves lived almoſt all ſingle, and received that portion as a kind of board-wages.

* The ſlaves in the great houſes, had little rooms aſſigned them, called *cellæ*. Whence the name of cell was transferred to the monks room in a convent. See farther on this head, JUST. LIPSIUS, Saturn. 1. cap. 14. Theſe form ſtrong preſumptions againſt the marriage and propagation of the family ſlaves.

† Opera et Dies, lib. 2. l. 24. alſo l. 220.

‡ STRABO, lib. 8. § De ratione redituum.

‖ See CATO de re ruſtica, cap. 56. Donatus in Phormion, l. 1. 9. SENECAE epiſt. 80.

The

The practice, indeed, of marrying the ſlaves ſeems not to have been very common, even among the country-labourers, where it is more naturally to be expected. CATO *, enumerating the ſlaves requiſite to labour a vineyard of a hundred acres, makes them to amount to 15; the overſeer and his wife, *villicus* and *villica*, and 13 male ſlaves; for an olive plantation of 240 acres, the overſeer and his wife, and 11 male ſlaves; and ſo in proportion to a greater or leſs plantation or vineyard.

VARRO †, citing this paſſage of CATO, allows his computation to be juſt in every reſpect, except the laſt. For as it is requiſite, ſays he, to have an overſeer and his wife, whether the vineyard or plantation be great or ſmall, this muſt alter the exactneſs of the proportion. Had CATO's computation been erroneous in any other reſpect, it had certainly been corrected by VARRO, who ſeems fond of diſcovering ſo trivial an error.

The ſame author ‡, as well as COLUMELLA §, recommends it as requiſite to give a wife to the overſeer, in order to attach him the more ſtrongly to his maſter's ſervice. This was therefore a peculiar indulgence granted to a ſlave, in whom ſo great a confidence was repoſed.

In the ſame place VARRO mentions it as an uſeful precaution, not to buy too many ſlaves from the ſame nation, leſt they beget factions and ſeditions in the family: A preſumption that in ITALY the greateſt part, even of the country labouring ſlaves, (for he ſpeaks of no other) were bought from the remoter provinces. All the world knows, that the family-ſlaves in ROME, who were inſtruments of ſhew and luxury, were commonly imported from the eaſt. *Hoc profecere*, ſays PLINY, ſpeaking of the jealous care of maſters, *mancipiorum legiones, et in domo turba externa ac ſervorum quoque cauſa nomenclator adhibendus* ‖.

* De re ruſt. cap. 10, 11. † Lib. 1. cap. 18. ‡ Lib. 1. cap. 17.
§ Lib. 1. cap. 18.
‖ Lib. 33. cap. 1. So likewiſe TACITUS, *annal.* lib. 14. cap. 44.

It

It is indeed recommended by VARRO *, to propagate young ſhepherds in the family from the old ones. For as graſing farms were commonly in remote and cheap places, and each ſhepherd lived in a cottage apart, his marriage and increaſe were not liable to the ſame inconveniencies as in dearer places, and where many ſervants lived in a family; which was univerſally the caſe in ſuch of the ROMAN farms as produced wine or corn. If we conſider this exception with regard to the ſhepherds, and weigh the reaſons of it, it will ſerve for a ſtrong confirmation of all our foregoing ſuſpicions †.

COLUMELLA ‡, I own, adviſes the maſter to give a reward, and even liberty to a female ſlave, that had reared him above three children: A proof, that ſometimes the antients propagated from their ſlaves; which, indeed, cannot be denied. Were it otherwiſe, the practice of ſlavery, being ſo common in antiquity, muſt have been deſtructive to a degree which no expedient could repair. All I pretend to infer from theſe reaſonings, is, that ſlavery is in general diſadvantageous both to the happineſs and populouſneſs of mankind, and that its place is much better ſupplied by the practice of hired ſervants.

The laws, or, as ſome writers call them, the ſeditions of the GRACCHI, were occaſioned by their obſerving the increaſe of ſlaves all over ITALY, and the diminution of free citizens. APPIAN § aſcribes this increaſe to the propagation of the ſlaves; PLUTARCH ‖ to the purchaſing of barbarians, who were chained and impriſoned, βαρβάρικα δεσμωτήρια †. 'Tis to be preſumed that both cauſes concurred.

SICILY,

* Lib. 2. cap. 10.

† Paſtoris duri eſt hic filius, ille bubulci. JUVEN. ſat. 11. 151.

‡ Lib. 1. cap. 8. § De bel. civ. lib. 1.

‖ In vita TIB. & C. GRACCHI.

† To the ſame purpoſe is that paſſage of the elder SENECA, ex controverſia 5. lib. 5. "Arata quondam populis rura, ſingulorum ergaſtulorum "ſunt;

SICILY, says FLORUS *, was full of *ergastula*, and was cultivated by labourers in chains. EUNUS and ATHENIO excited the servile war, by breaking up these monstrous prisons, and giving liberty to 60,000 slaves. The younger POMPEY augmented his army in SPAIN by the same expedient †. If the country-labourers, throughout the ROMAN empire, were so generally in this situation, and if it was difficult or impossible to find separate lodgings for the families of the city-servants, how unfavourable to propagation, as well as to humanity, must the institution of domestic slavery be esteemed?

CONSTANTINOPLE, at present, requires the same recruits of slaves from all the provinces, which ROME did of old; and these provinces are of consequence far from being populous.

EGYPT, according to Monf. MAILLET, sends continual colonies of black slaves to the other parts of the TURKISH empire; and receives annually an equal return of white: The one brought from the inland parts of AFRICA; the other from MINGRELIA, CIRCASSIA, and TARTARY.

Our modern convents are, no doubt, very bad institutions: But there is reason to suspect, that antiently every great family in ITALY, and probably in other parts of the world, was a species of convent. And tho' we have reason to detest all those popish institutions, as nurseries

" sunt; latiusque nunc villici, quam olim rages, imperant. At nunc eadem," says PLINY, " vincti pedes, damnatae manus, inscripti vultus exercent." lib. 18. cap. 3. So also MARTIAL.

" Et sonet innumera compede Thuscus ager." lib. 9. ep. 23.

And LUCAN. " Tum longos jungere fines
Agrorum, et quondam duro sulcata Camilli,
Vomere et antiquas Curiorum passa ligones,
Longa sub ignotis extendere rura colonis. lib. 1.
Vincto fossore coluntur
Hesperiae segetes. —— lib. 7.

* Lib. 3. cap. 19. † Id. lib. 4. cap. 8.

of

of the moſt abject ſuperſtition, burthenſome to the public, and oppreſſive to the poor priſoners, male as well as female; yet may it be queſtioned whether they be ſo deſtructive to the populouſneſs of a ſtate as is commonly imagined. Were the land which belongs to a convent, beſtowed on a nobleman, he would ſpend its revenue on dogs, horſes, grooms, footmen, cooks, and houſe-maids; and his family would not furniſh many more citizens than the convent.

The common reaſon why parents thruſt their daughters into nunneries, is, that they may not be over-burthened with too numerous a family; but the antients had a method almoſt as innocent, and more effectual to that purpoſe, *viz.* the expoſing their children in the earlieſt infancy. This practice was very common; and is not mentioned by any author of thoſe times with the horror it deſerves, or ſcarce * even with diſapprobation. PLUTARCH, the humane, good-natured PLUTARCH, † recommends it as a virtue in ATTALUS, king of PERGAMUS, that he murdered, or, if you will, expoſed all his own children, in order to leave his crown to the ſon of his brother, EUMENES; ſignalizing in this manner his gratitude and affection to EUMENES, who had left him his heir preferable to that ſon. It was SOLON, the moſt celebrated of the ſages of GREECE, who gave parents permiſſion by law to kill their children ‡.

Shall we then allow theſe two circumſtances to compenſate each other, *viz.* monaſtic vows and the expoſing of children, and to be unfavourable, in equal degrees, to the propagation of mankind? I doubt the advantage is here on the ſide of antiquity. Perhaps, by an odd con-

* TACITUS blames it. De morib. Germ.

† De fraterno amore. SENECA alſo approves of the expoſing of ſickly, infirm children. De ira, lib. 1. cap. 15.

‡ SEXT. EMP. lib. 3. cap. 24.

nection

nection of cauſes, the barbarous practice of the antients might rather render thoſe times more populous. By removing the terrors of too numerous a family, it would engage many people in marriage; and ſuch is the force of natural affection, that very few, in compariſon, would have reſolution enough, when it came to the puſh, to carry into execution their former intentions.

CHINA, the only country where this cruel practice of expoſing children prevails at preſent, is the moſt populous country we know; and every man is married before he is twenty. Such early marriages could ſcarce be general, had not men the proſpect of ſo eaſy a method of getting rid of their children. I own, that PLUTARCH † ſpeaks of it as a very univerſal maxim of the poor to expoſe their children; and as the rich were then averſe to marriage, on account of the courtſhip they met with from thoſe who expected legacies from them, the public muſt have been in a bad ſituation betwixt them ‡.

Of all ſciences there is none, where firſt appearances are more deceitful than in politics. Hoſpitals for foundlings ſeem favourable to the increaſe of numbers; and, perhaps, may be ſo, when kept under proper reſtrictions. But when they open the door to every one, without diſtinction, they have probably a contrary effect, and are pernicious to the ſtate. 'Tis computed, that every ninth

† De amore prolis.

‡ The practice of leaving great ſums of money to friends, tho' one had near relations, was common in GREECE as well as ROME; as we may gather from LUCIAN. This practice prevails much leſs in modern times; and BEN. JOHNSON'S VOLPONE is therefore almoſt entirely extracted from antient authors, and ſuits better the manners of thoſe times.

It may juſtly be thought, that the liberty of divorces in ROME was another diſcouragement to marriage. Such a practice prevents not quarrels from *humour*, but rather increaſes them; and occaſions alſo thoſe from *intereſt*, which are much more dangerous and deſtructive. See farther on this head, Eſſays moral, political, and literary, Part I. eſſay XIX. Perhaps too the unnatural luſts of the antients ought to be taken into conſideration, as of ſome moment.

child born at PARIS, is ſent to the hoſpital; tho' it ſeems certain, according to the common courſe of human affairs, that 'tis not a hundredth part whoſe parents are altogether incapacitated to rear and educate them. The infinite difference, for health, induſtry, and morals, between an education in an hoſpital and that in a private family, ſhould induce us not to make the entrance into an hoſpital too eaſy and engaging. To kill one's own child is ſhocking to nature, and muſt therefore be pretty unuſual; but to turn over the care of him upon others is very tempting to the natural indolence of mankind.

Having conſidered the domeſtic life and manners of the antients, compared to thoſe of the moderns; where, in the main, we ſeem rather ſuperior, ſo far as the preſent queſtion is concerned; we ſhall now examine the *political* cuſtoms and inſtitutions of both ages, and weigh their influence in retarding or forwarding the propagation of mankind.

Before the increaſe of the ROMAN power, or rather till its full eſtabliſhment, almoſt all the nations which are the ſcene of antient hiſtory, were divided into ſmall territories or petty commonwealths, where of courſe a great equality of fortune prevailed, and the centre of the government was always very near its frontiers.

This was the ſituation of affairs not only in GREECE and ITALY, but alſo in SPAIN, GAUL, GERMANY, AFRIC, and a great part of the LESSER ASIA. And it muſt be owned, that no inſtitution could be more favourable to the propagation of mankind. For tho' a man of an overgrown fortune, not being able to conſume more than another, muſt ſhare it with thoſe who ſerve and attend him; yet their poſſeſſion being precarious, they have not the ſame encouragement to marriage, as if each had a ſmall fortune, ſecure and independent. Enormous cities are, beſides, deſtructive to ſociety, beget vice and diſorder

diſorder of all kinds, ſtarve the remoter provinces, and even ſtarve themſelves, by the prices to which they raiſe all proviſions. Where each man had his little houſe and field to himſelf, and each county had its capital, free and independent; what a happy ſituation of mankind! How favourable to induſtry and agriculture; to marriage and propagation! The prolific virtue of men, were it to act in its full extent, without that reſtraint which poverty and neceſſity impoſes on it, would double the number every generation: And nothing ſurely can give it more liberty, than ſuch ſmall commonwealths, and ſuch an equality of fortune among the citizens. All ſmall ſtates naturally produce equality of fortune, becauſe they afford no opportunities of great increaſe; but ſmall commonwealths much more, by that diviſion of power and authority which is eſſential to them.

When XENOPHON * returned after the famous expedition with CYRUS, he hired himſelf and 6000 of the GREEKS into the ſervice of SEUTHES, a prince of THRACE; and the articles of his agreement were, that each ſoldier ſhould receive a *daric* a month, each captain two *darics*, and he himſelf, as general, four: A regulation of pay which would not a little ſurpriſe our modern officers.

DEMOSTHENES and ÆSCHINES, with eight more, were ſent ambaſſadors to PHILIP of MACEDON, and their appointments for above four months were a thouſand *drachmas*, which is leſs than a *drachma* a day for each ambaſſador †. But a *drachma* a day, nay ſometimes two ‡, was the pay of a common foot-ſoldier.

A centurion among the ROMANS had only double pay to a private man, in POLYBIUS's time §, and we accord-

* *De exp.* CYR. lib. 7.
† DEMOST. *de falſa leg.* He calls it a conſiderable ſum.
‡ THUCYD. lib. 3. § Lib. 6. cap. 37.

ingly find the gratuities after a triumph regulated by that proportion *. But MARK ANTHONY and the triumvirate gave the centurions five times the reward of the other †. So much had the increaſe of the commonwealth increaſed the inequality among the citizens ‡.

It muſt be owned, that the ſituation of affairs in modern times, with regard to civil liberty, as well as equality of fortune, is not near ſo favourable, either to the propagation or happineſs of mankind. EUROPE is ſhared out moſtly into great monarchies; and ſuch parts of it as are divided into ſmall territories, are commonly governed by abſolute princes, who ruin their people by a ridiculous mimickry of the greater monarchs, in the ſplendor of their court and number of their forces. SWISSERLAND alone and HOLLAND reſemble the antient republics; and tho' the former is far from poſſeſſing any advantage either of ſoil, climate, or commerce, yet the numbers of people, with which it abounds, notwithſtanding their inliſting themſelves into every ſervice in EUROPE, prove ſufficiently the advantages of their political inſtitutions.

The antient republics derived their chief or only ſecurity from the numbers of their citizens. The TRACHINIANS having loſt great numbers of their people, the remainder, inſtead of inriching themſelves by the inheritance of their fellow-citizens, applied to SPARTA, their metropolis, for a new ſtock of inhabitants. The SPARTANS immediately collected ten thouſand men: among whom the old citizens divided the lands of which the former proprietors had periſhed §.

* TIT. LIV. lib. 41. cap. 7. 13. & *alibi paſſim.*

† APPIAN. *De bell. civ.* lib. 4.

‡ CÆSAR gave the centurions ten times the gratuity of the common ſoldiers, *De bell. Gallico*, lib. 8. In the RHODIAN cartel, mentioned afterwards, no diſtinction in the ranſom was made on account of ranks in the army.

§ DIOD. SIC. lib. 12. THUCYD. lib. 3.

After

After TIMOLEON had baniſhed DIONYSIUS from SYRACUSE, and had ſettled the affairs of SICILY, finding the cities of SYRACUSE and SELLINUNTIUM extremely depopulated by tyranny, war, and faction, he invited over from GREECE ſome new inhabitants to repeople them *. Immediately forty thouſand men (PLUTARCH † ſays ſixty thouſand) offered themſelves; and he diſtributed ſo many lots of land among them, to the great ſatisfaction of the antient inhabitants: A proof at once of the maxims of antient policy, which affected populouſneſs more than riches; and of the good effects of theſe maxims, in the extreme populouſneſs of that ſmall country, GREECE, which could at once ſupply ſo large a colony. The caſe was not much different with the ROMANS in early times. He is a pernicious citizen, ſaid M. CURIUS, who cannot be contented with ſeven acres ‡. Such ideas of equality could not fail of producing great numbers of people.

We muſt now conſider what diſadvantages the antients lay under with regard to populouſneſs, and what checks they received from their political maxims and inſtitutions. There are commonly compenſations in every human condition; and tho' theſe compenſations be not always perfectly equal, yet they ſerve, at leaſt, to reſtrain the prevailing principle. To compare them and eſtimate their influence, is indeed very difficult, even where they take place in the ſame age, and in neighbouring countries: But where ſeveral ages have intervened, and only ſcat-

* DIOD. SIC. lib. 16. † *In vita* TIMOL.

‡ PLIN. lib. 18. cap. 3. The ſame author, in cap. 6. ſays, *Verumque fatentibus latifundia perdidere* ITALIAM; *jam vero et provincias. Sex domi ſeniſſem* AFRICÆ *poſſidebant, cum interfecit eos* NERO *princeps.* In this view, the barbarous butchery committed by the firſt ROMAN emperors, was not, perhaps, ſo deſtructive to the public as we may imagine. Theſe never ceaſed till they had extinguiſhed all the illuſtrious families, which had enjoyed the plunder of the world, during the latter ages of the republic. The new nobles who roſe in their place, were leſs ſplendid, as we learn from TACIT. *ann.* lib. 3. cap. 55.

tered lights are afforded us by antient authors; what can we do but amuse ourselves by talking, *pro* and *con*, on an interesting subject, and thereby correcting all hasty and violent determinations?

First, We may observe, that the antient republics were almost in perpetual war; a natural effect of their martial spirit, their love of liberty, their mutual emulation, and that hatred which generally prevails among nations that live in a close neighbourhood. Now, war in a small state is much more destructive than in a great one; both because all the inhabitants, in the former case, must serve in the armies; and because the state is all frontier, and all exposed to the inroads of the enemy.

The maxims of antient war were much more destructive than those of modern; chiefly by the distribution of plunder, in which the soldiers were indulged. The private men in our armies are such a low rascally set of people, that we find any abundance beyond their simple pay, breeds confusion and disorder, and a total dissolution of discipline. The very wretchedness and meanness of those who fill the modern armies, render them less destructive to the countries which they invade: One instance, among many, of the deceitfulness of first appearances in all political reasonings *.

Antient battles were much more bloody by the very nature of the weapons employed in them. The antients drew up their men 16 or 20, sometimes 50 men deep, which made a narrow front; and it was not difficult to find a field, in which both armies might be marshalled, and might engage with each other. Even where any

* The antient soldiers, being free citizens, above the lowest rank, were all married. Our modern soldiers are either forced to live unmarried, or their marriages turn to small account towards the increase of mankind. A circumstance which ought, perhaps, to be taken into consideration, as of some consequence in favour of the antients.

body

body of the troops was kept off by hedges, hillocks, woods, or hollow ways, the battle was not ſo ſoon decided betwixt the contending parties, but that the others had time to overcome the difficulties which oppoſed them, and take part in the engagement. And as the whole armies were thus engaged, and each man cloſely buckled to his antagoniſt, the battles were commonly very bloody, and great ſlaughter was made on both ſides, eſpecially on the vanquiſhed. The long thin lines required by fire-arms, and the quick deciſion of the fray, render our modern engagements but partial rencounters, and enable the general, who is foiled in the beginning of the day, to draw off the greateſt part of his army, ſound and intire. Could FOLARD's project of the column take place (which ſeems impracticable *) it would render modern battles as deſtructive as the antient.

The battles of antiquity, both by their duration, and their reſemblance of ſingle combats, were wrought up to a degree of fury quite unknown to latter ages. Nothing could then engage the combatants to give quarter, but the hopes of profit, by making ſlaves of their priſoners. In civil wars, as we learn from TACITUS †, the battles were the moſt bloody, becauſe the priſoners were not ſlaves.

What a ſtout reſiſtance muſt be made, where the vanquiſhed expected ſo hard a fate! How inveterate the rage, where the maxims of war were, in every reſpect, ſo bloody and ſevere!

Inſtances are very frequent, in antient hiſtory, of cities beſieged, whoſe inhabitants, rather than open their gates, murdered their wives and children, and ruſhed themſelves

* What is the advantage of the column after it has broke the enemy's line? only, that it then takes them in flank, and diſſipates whatever ſtands near it by a fire from all ſides. But till it has broke them, does it not preſent a flank to the enemy, and that expoſed to their muſquetry, and, what is much worſe, to their cannon?

† Hiſt. lib. 2. cap. 44.

on a voluntary death, ſweetened perhaps with a little proſpect of revenge upon the enemy. GREEKS*, as well as BARBARIANS, have been often wrought up to this degree of fury. And the ſame determined ſpirit and cruelty muſt, in many other inſtances, leſs remarkable, have been extremely deſtructive to human ſociety, in thoſe petty commonwealths, which lived in a cloſe neighbourhood, and were engaged in perpetual wars and contentions.

Sometimes the wars in GREECE, ſays PLUTARCH †, were carried on intirely by inroads, and robberies, and piracies. Such a method of war muſt be more deſtructive, in ſmall ſtates, than the bloodieſt battles and ſieges.

By the laws of the twelve tables, poſſeſſion for two years formed a preſcription for land; one year for moveables ‡: An indication, that there was not in ITALY, during that period, much more order, tranquillity, and ſettled police, than there is at preſent among the TARTARS.

The only cartel I remember in antient hiſtory, is, that between DEMETRIUS POLIORCETES and the RHODIANS; when it was agreed, that a free citizen ſhould be reſtored for 1000 *drachmas*, a ſlave bearing arms for 500 ‖.

But, *ſecondly*, it appears that antient manners were more unfavourable than the modern, not only in times of war, but alſo in thoſe of peace; and that too in every reſpect, except the love of civil liberty and equality, which is, I own, of conſiderable importance. To exclude faction from a free government, is very difficult, if not altogether

* As ABYDUS, mentioned by LIVY, lib. 31. cap. 17. 18. and POLYB. lib. 16. As alſo the XANTHIANS, APPIAN. *de bell. civil.* lib. 4.

† *In vita* ARATI.

‡ INST. lib. 2. cap. 6. 'Tis true, the ſame law ſeems to have been continued till the time of JUSTINIAN. But abuſes introduced by barbariſm, are not always corrected by civility.

‖ DIOD. SICUL. lib. 20.

im-

impracticable; but ſuch inveterate rage between the factions, and ſuch bloody maxims, are found, in modern times, amongſt religious parties alone, where bigotted prieſts are the accuſers, judges, and executioners. In antient hiſtory, we may always obſerve, where one party prevailed, whether the nobles or people (for I can obſerve no difference in this reſpect *) that they immediately butchered all of the oppoſite party who fell into their hands, and baniſhed ſuch as had been ſo fortunate as to eſcape their fury. No form of proceſs, no law, no trial, no pardon. A fourth, a third, perhaps near a half of the city, were ſlaughtered, or expelled, every revolution; and the exiles always joined foreign enemies, and did all the miſchief poſſible to their fellow citizens; till fortune put it in their power to take full revenge by a new revolution. And as theſe were very frequent in ſuch violent governments, the diſorder, diffidence, jealouſy, enmity, which muſt prevail, are not eaſy for us to imagine in this age of the world.

There are only two revolutions I can recollect in antient hiſtory, which paſſed without great ſeverity, and great effuſion of blood in maſſacres and aſſaſſinations, *viz.* the reſtoration of the ATHENIAN Democracy by THRASYBULUS, and the ſubduing the ROMAN republic by CÆSAR. We learn from antient hiſtory, that THRASYBULUS paſſed a general amneſty for all paſt offences; and firſt introduced that word, as well as practice, into GREECE †. It appears, however, from many orations of LYSIAS ‡, that the chief, and even ſome of the ſubaltern offenders, in the preceding tyranny, were tried, and capitally pu-

* LYSIAS, who was himſelf of the popular faction, and very narrowly eſcaped from the thirty tyrants, ſays, that the Democracy was as violent a government as the Oligarchy. *Orat.* 24. *de ſtatu popul.*

† CICERO, PHILIP. I.

‡ As *orat.* 11. *contra* ERATOST. *orat.* 12. *contra* AGORAT. *orat.* 15. *pro* MANTITH.

niſhed. This is a difficulty not cleared up, and even not obſerved by antiquarians and hiſtorians. And as to CÆSAR's clemency, tho' much celebrated, it would not gain great applauſe in the preſent age. He butchered, for inſtance, all CATO's ſenate, when he became maſter of UTICA *; and theſe, we may readily believe, were not the moſt worthleſs of the party. All thoſe who had borne arms againſt that uſurper, were forfeited; and, by HIRTIUS's law, declared incapable of all public offices.

Theſe people were extremely fond of liberty; but ſeem not to have underſtood it very well. When the thirty tyrants firſt eſtabliſhed their dominion at ATHENS, they began with ſeizing all the ſycophants and informers, who had been ſo troubleſome during the Democracy, and putting them to death by an arbitrary ſentence and execution. *Every man*, ſays SALLUST † and LYSIAS ‡, *was rejoiced at theſe puniſhments*; not conſidering, that liberty was from that moment annihilated.

The utmoſt energy of the nervous ſtyle of THUCYDIDES, and the copiouſneſs and expreſſion of the GREEK language, ſeem to ſink under that hiſtorian, when he attempts to deſcribe the diſorders which aroſe from faction thro'out all the GREEK commonwealths. You would imagine, that he ſtill labours with a thought greater than he can find words to communicate. And he concludes his pathetic deſcription with an obſervation, which is at once very refined and very ſolid. "In theſe conteſts," ſays he, "thoſe who were dulleſt and moſt ſtupid, and "had the leaſt foreſight, commonly prevailed. For be- "ing conſcious of this weakneſs, and dreading to be "over-reached by thoſe of greater penetration, they went

* APPIAN. *de bell. civ.* lib. 2.

† See CÆSAR's ſpeech, *de bell. Catil.*

‡ *Orat.* 24. And in *orat.* 29. he mentions the factious ſpirit of the popular aſſemblies as the only cauſe why theſe illegal puniſhments ſhould diſpleaſe.

"to

"to work hastily, without premeditation, by the sword "and poniard, and thereby prevented their antagonists, "who were forming fine schemes and projects for their "destruction*."

Not to mention DIONYSIUS† the elder, who is computed to have butchered in cold blood above 10,000 of his fellow-citizens; nor AGATHOCLES‡, NABIS§, and others, still more bloody than he; the transactions, even in free governments, were extremely violent and destructive. At ATHENS, the thirty tyrants and the nobles, in a twelvemonth, murdered, without trial, about 1200 of the people, and banished above the half of the citizens that remained‖. In ARGOS, near the same time, the people killed 1200 of the nobles; and afterwards their own demagogues, because they had refused to carry their prosecutions farther**. The people also in CORCYRA killed 1500 of the nobles, and banished a thousand††. These numbers will appear the more surprising, if we consider the extreme smallness of these states. But all antient history is full of such instances‖‖.

When

* Lib. 3. The country in EUROPE in which I have observed the factions to be most violent, and party-hatred the strongest, is IRELAND. This goes so far as to cut off even the most common intercourse of civilities between the Protestants and Catholics. Their cruel insurrections, and the severe revenges which they have taken of each other, are the causes of this mutual ill will, which is the chief source of the disorder, poverty, and depopulation of that country. The GREEK factions I imagine to have been inflamed still to a higher degree of rage; the revolutions being commonly more frequent, and the maxims of assassination much more avowed and acknowledged.

† PLUT. *de virt. & fort.* ALEX. ‡ DIOD. SIC. lib. 18, 19.

§ TIT. LIV. lib. 31, 33, 34.

‖ DIOD. SIC. lib. 14. ISOCRATES says there were only 5000 banished. He makes the number of those killed amount to 1500. AREOP. ÆSCHINES *contra* CTESIPH. assigns precisely the same number. SENECA *(de tranq. anim.* cap. 5.) says 1300.

** DIOD. SIC. lib. 15. †† DIOD. SIC. lib. 13.

‖‖ We shall mention from DIODORUS SICULUS alone a few, which passed in the course of sixty years during the most shining age of GREECE. There were

I need not insist on the GREEK tyrannies, which were altogether horrible. Even the mixed monarchies, by which most of the antient states of GREECE were governed, before the introduction of republics, were very unsettled. Scarce any city, but ATHENS, says ISOCRATES, could show a succession of kings for four or five generations *.

Besides many other obvious reasons for the instability of ancient monarchies, the equal division of property among the brothers in private families, must, by a necessary consequence, contribute to unsettle and disturb the state. The universal preference given to the elder by modern laws, tho' it increases the inequality of fortunes, has, however, this good effect, that it accustoms men to the same idea of public succession, and cuts off all claim and pretension of the younger.

The new settled colony of HERACLEA, falling immediately into factions, applied to SPARTA, who sent HE-

chorus of men 20 minas; εισπυρριχισταις 8 minas; ανδρασι χορηγων 50 minas; κυκλικω χωρω 3 minas; Seven times trierarch, where he spent 6 talents: Taxes, once 30 minas, another time 40; γυμνασιαρχων, 12 minas; χορηγος παιδικω χωρω, 15 minas; κομοδοις χορηγων, 18 minas; πυρριχισταις αγενειοις, 7 minas; τριηρει αμιλλομενος, 15 minas; αρχηθεωρος, 30 minas: In the whole ten talents 38 minas. An immense sum for an ATHENIAN fortune, and what alone would be esteemed great riches, *Orat.* 20. 'Tis true, he says, the law did not oblige him absolutely to be at so much expence, not above a fourth. But without the favour of the people, no body was so much as safe; and this was the only way to gain it. See farther, *orat.* 24. *de pop. statu.* In another place, he introduces a speaker, who says that he had spent his whole fortune, and an immense one, eighty talents, for the people. *Orat.* 25. *de prob.* EVANDRI. The μετοικοι, or strangers, find, says he, if they do not contribute largely enough to the people's fancy, that they have reason to repent. *Orat.* 30. *contra* PHIL. You may see with what care DEMOSTHENES displays his expences of this nature, when he pleads for himself *de corona*; and how he exaggerates MIDIAS's stinginess in this particular, in his accusation of that criminal. All this, by the by, is a mark of a very iniquitous judicature: And yet the ATHENIANS valued themselves on having the most legal and regular administration of any people in GREECE.

* Panath.

RIPIDAS

RIPIDAS with full authority to quiet their diſſenſions. This man, not provoked by any oppoſition, not inflamed by party rage, knew no better expedient than immediately putting to death about 500 of the citizens †. A ſtrong proof how deeply rooted theſe violent maxims of government were throughout all GREECE.

If ſuch was the diſpoſition of mens minds among that refined people, what may be expected in the commonwealths of ITALY, AFRIC, SPAIN, and GAUL, which were denominated barbarous? Why otherwiſe did the GREEKS ſo much value themſelves on their humanity, gentleneſs and moderation, above all other nations? This reaſoning ſeems very natural. But unluckily the hiſtory of the ROMAN commonwealth, in its earlier times, if we give credit to the received accounts, ſtands againſt us. No blood was ever ſhed in any ſedition at ROME, till the murder of the GRACCHI. DIONYSIUS HALICARNASSÆUS ‡, obſerving the ſingular humanity of the ROMAN people in this particular, makes uſe of it as an argument that they were originally of GRECIAN extraction: Whence we may conclude, that the factions and revolutions in the barbarous republics were uſually more violent than even thoſe of GREECE above-mentioned.

If the ROMANS were ſo late in coming to blows, they made ample compenſation after they had once entered upon the bloody ſcene; and APPIAN's hiſtory of their civil wars contains the moſt frightful picture of maſſacres, proſcriptions, and forfeitures, that ever was preſented to the world. What pleaſes moſt, in that hiſtorian, is, that he ſeems to feel a proper reſentment of theſe barbarous proceedings; and talks not with that provoking coolneſs and indifference, which cuſtom had produced in many of the GREEK hiſtorians *.

The

† DIOD. SIC. lib. 14. ‡ Lib. 1.

* The authorities cited above, are all hiſtorians, orators, and philoſophers, whoſe teſtimony is unqueſtioned. 'Tis dangerous to rely upon writers who

The maxims of antient politics contain, in general, ſo little humanity and moderation, that it ſeems ſuperfluous to give any particular reaſon for the violences committed at any particular period. Yet I cannot forbear obſerving, that the laws, in the latter ages of the ROMAN commonwealth, were ſo abſurdly contrived, that they obliged the heads of parties to have recourſe to theſe extremities. All capital puniſhments were aboliſhed: However criminal, or, what is more, however dangerous any citizen might be, he could not regularly be puniſhed otherwiſe than by baniſhment: And it became neceſſary, in the revolutions of party, to draw the ſword of private vengeance; nor was it eaſy, when laws were once violated, to ſet bounds to theſe ſanguinary proceedings. Had BRUTUS himſelf prevailed over the *triumvirate*, could he, in common prudence, have allowed OCTAVIUS and ANTHONY to live, and have contented himſelf with baniſhing them to RHODES or MARSEILLES, where they might ſtill have plotted new commotions and rebellions? His executing C. ANTONIUS, brother to the *triumvir*, ſhows evidently his ſenſe of the matter. Did not CICERO, with the ap-

who deal in ridicule and ſatyr. What will poſterity, for inſtance, infer from this paſſage of Dr. SWIFT? "I told him, that in the kingdom of TRIB-"NIA (BRITAIN) by the natives called LANGDON (LONDON) where I "had ſojourned ſome time in my travels, the bulk of the people conſiſt, in a "manner, wholly of diſcoverers, witneſſes, informers, accuſers, proſecu-"tors, evidences, ſwearers, together with their ſeveral ſubſervient and ſub-"altern inſtruments, all under the colours, the conduct, and pay of mini-"ſters of ſtate and their deputies. The plots in that kingdom are uſually "the workmanſhip of thoſe perſons," *&c.* GULLIVER's *travels*. Such a repreſentation might ſuit the government of ATHENS; but not that of ENGLAND, which is a prodigy even in modern times, for humanity, juſtice, and liberty. Yet the Doctor's ſatyr, tho' carried to extremes, as is uſual with him, even beyond other ſatyrical writers, did not altogether want an object. The Biſhop of ROCHESTER, who was his friend, and of the ſame party, had been baniſhed a little before by a bill of attainder, with great juſtice, but without ſuch a proof as was legal, or according to the ſtrict forms of common law.

probation

probation of all the wise and virtuous of ROME, arbitrarily put to death CATALINE's associates, contrary to law, and without any trial or form of process? And if he moderated his executions, did it not proceed, either from the clemency of his temper, or the conjunctures of the times? A wretched security in a government which pretends to laws and liberty!

Thus, one extreme produces another. In the same manner as excessive severity in the laws is apt to beget great relaxation in their execution; so their excessive lenity naturally produces cruelty and barbarity. 'Tis dangerous to force us, in any case, to pass their sacred boundaries.

One general cause of the disorders so frequent in all antient governments, seems to have consisted in the great difficulty of establishing any Aristocracy in those ages, and the perpetual discontents and seditions of the people, whenever even the meanest and most beggarly were excluded from the legislature and from public offices. The very quality of *freeman* gave such a rank, being opposed to that of slave, that it seemed to intitle the possessor to every power and privilege of the commonwealth. SOLON's † laws excluded no freeman from votes or elections, but confined some magistracies to a particular *census*; yet were the people never satisfied till those laws were repealed. By the treaty with ANTIPATER ‡, no ATHENIAN had a vote whose *census* was less than 2000 *drachmas* (about 60 *l. Sterling*). And tho' such a government would to us appear sufficiently democratical, it was so disagreeable to that people, that above two thirds of them immediately left their country ‖. CASSANDER reduced that *census* to the half §; yet still the government was

† PLUTARCHUS *in vita* SOLON.
‡ DIOD. SIC. lib. 18.
‖ Id. ibid. § Id. ibid.

considered

considered as an oligarchical tyranny, and the effect of foreign violence.

SERVIUS TULLIUS's † laws seem very equal and reasonable, by fixing the power in proportion to the property: Yet the ROMAN people could never be brought quietly to submit to them.

In those days there was no medium between a severe, jealous Aristocracy, ruling over discontented subjects; and a turbulent, factious, tyrannical Democracy.

But, *thirdly*, there are many other circumstances, in which antient nations seem inferior to the modern, both for the happiness and increase of mankind. Trade, manufactures, industry, were no where, in former ages, so flourishing as they are at present in EUROPE. The only garb of the antients, both for males and females, seems to have been a kind of flannel, which they wore commonly white or grey, and which they scoured as often as it grew dirty. TYRE, which carried on, after CARTHAGE, the greatest commerce of any city in the MEDITERANEAN, before it was destroyed by ALEXANDER, was no mighty city, if we credit ARRIAN's account of its inhabitants ‡. ATHENS is commonly supposed to have been a trading city: But it was as populous before the MEDIAN war as at any time after it, according to HERODOTUS ‖; and yet its commerce, at that time, was so inconsiderable, that, as the same historian observes §, even the neighbouring coasts of ASIA were as little frequented by the GREEKS as the pillars of HERCULES: For beyond these he conceived nothing.

† TIT. LIV. lib. 1. cap. 43.

‡ Lib. 2. There were 8000 killed during the siege; and the whole captives amounted to 30,000. DIODORUS SICULUS, lib. 17. says only 13,000: But he accounts for this small number, by saying that the TYRIANS had sent away beforehand part of their wives and children to CARTHAGE.

‖ Lib. 5. he makes the number of the citizens amount to 30,000.

§ Ib. 3.

Great

Great intereſt of money, and great profits of trade, are an infallible indication, that induſtry and commerce are but in their infancy. We read in LYSIAS * of 100 *per cent.* profit made of a cargo of two talents, ſent to no greater diſtance than from ATHENS to the ADRIATIC: Nor is this mentioned as an inſtance of exorbitant profit. ANTIDORUS, ſays DEMOSTHENES †, paid three talents and a half for a houſe, which he let at a talent a-year: And the orator blames his own tutors for not employing his money to like advantage. My fortune, ſays he, in eleven years minority, ought to have been tripled. The value of 20 of the ſlaves left by his father, he computes at 40 minas, and the yearly profit of their labour at 12 ‡. The moſt moderate intereſt at ATHENS, (for there was higher ‖ often paid) was 12 *per cent.* §, and that paid monthly. Not to inſiſt upon the exorbitant intereſt of 34 *per cent.* to which the vaſt ſums diſtributed in elections had raiſed money ⸸ at ROME, we find, that VERRES, before that factious period, ſtated 24 *per cent.* for money, which he left in the publicans hands. And tho' CICERO declaims againſt this article, it is not on account of the extravagant uſury; but becauſe it had never been cuſtomary to ſtate any intereſt on ſuch occaſions ††. Intereſt, indeed, ſunk at ROME, after the ſettlement of the empire: But it never remained any conſiderable time ſo low, as in the commercial ſtates of modern ages §§.

Among the other inconveniencies which the ATHENIANS felt from the fortifying DECELIA by the LACEDEMONIANS, it is repreſented by THUCYDIDES ‡‡, as

* *Orat.* 33. *adverſ.* DIAGIT.
† *Contra* APHOB. p. 25. *ex edit.* ALDI.
‡ Id. p. 19. ‖ Id. ibid.
§ Id. ibid. and ÆSCHINES *contra* CTESIPH.
⸸ *Epiſt. ad* ATTIC. lib. 5. epiſt. 21.
†† *Contra* VERR. *orat.* 3. §§ See Eſſay IV. ‡‡ Lib. 7.

one of the moſt conſiderable, that they could not bring over their corn from EUBEA by land, paſſing by OROPUS; but were obliged to embark it, and to ſail about the promontory of SUNIUM. A ſurpriſing inſtance of the imperfection of antient navigation: For the water-carriage is not here above double the land.

I do not remember any paſſage in any antient author, where the growth of any city is aſcribed to the eſtabliſhment of a manufacture. The commerce which is ſaid to flouriſh, is chiefly the exchange of thoſe commodities for which different ſoils and climates were ſuited. The ſale of wine and oil into AFRICA, according to DIODORUS SICULUS *, was the foundation of the riches of AGRIGENTUM. The ſituation of the city of SYBARIS, according to the ſame author †, was the cauſe of its immenſe populouſneſs: being built near the two rivers CRATHYS and SYBARIS. But theſe two rivers, we may obſerve, are not navigable; and could only produce ſome fertile valleys, for agriculture and huſbandry; an advantage ſo inconſiderable, that a modern writer would ſcarcely have taken notice of it.

The barbarity of the antient tyrants, together with the extreme love of liberty, which animated thoſe ages, muſt have baniſhed every merchant and manufacturer; and have quite depopulated the ſtate, had it ſubſiſted upon induſtry and commerce. While the cruel and ſuſpicious DIONYSIUS was carrying on his butcheries, who, that was not detained by his landed property, and could have carried with him any art or ſkill to procure a ſubſiſtence in other countries, would have remained expoſed to ſuch implacable barbarity? The perſecutions of PHILIP II. and LEWIS XIV. filled all EUROPE with the manufacturers of FLANDERS and of FRANCE.

* Lib. 13. † Lib. 12.

I grant,

I grant, that agriculture is the ſpecies of induſtry which is chiefly requiſite to the ſubſiſtence of multitudes; and it is poſſible, that this induſtry may flouriſh, even where manufactures and other arts are unknown and neglected. SWISSERLAND is at preſent a very remarkable inſtance; where we find, at once, the moſt ſkilful huſbandmen and the moſt bungling tradeſmen, that are to be met with in all EUROPE. That agriculture flouriſhed mightily in GREECE and ITALY, at leaſt in ſome parts of them, and at ſome periods, we have reaſon to preſume: And whether the mechanical arts had reached the ſame degree of perfection, may not be eſteemed ſo material; eſpecially, if we conſider the great equality in the antient republics, where each family was obliged to cultivate, with the greateſt care and induſtry, its own little field, in order to its ſubſiſtence.

But is it juſt reaſoning, becauſe agriculture may, in ſome inſtances, flouriſh without trade or manufactures, to conclude, that, in any great extent of country, and for any great tract of time, it would ſubſiſt alone? The moſt natural way, ſurely, of encouraging huſbandry, is, firſt, to excite other kinds of induſtry, and thereby afford the labourer a ready market for his commodities, and a return of ſuch goods as may contribute to his pleaſure and enjoyment. This method is infallible and univerſal; and as it prevails more in modern government than in the antient, it affords a preſumption of the ſuperior populouſneſs of the former.

Every man, ſays XENOPHON †, may be a farmer: No art or ſkill is requiſite: All conſiſts in the induſtry, and attention to the execution. A ſtrong proof, as COLUMELLA hints, that agriculture was but little known in the age of XENOPHON.

† Oecon.

All our latter improvements and refinements, have they operated nothing towards the eaſy ſubſiſtence of men, and conſequently towards their propagation and increaſe? Our ſuperior ſkill in mechanics, the diſcovery of new worlds, by which commerce has been ſo much enlarged, the eſtabliſhment of poſts, and the uſe of bills of exchange: Theſe ſeem all extremely uſeful to the encouragement of art, induſtry, and populouſneſs. Were we to ſtrike off theſe, what a check ſhould we give to every kind of buſineſs and labour, and what multitudes of families would immediately periſh from want and hunger? And it ſeems not probable, that we could ſupply the place of theſe new inventions by any other regulation or inſtitution.

Have we reaſon to think, that the police of antient ſtates was any way comparable to that of modern, or that men had then equal ſecurity, either at home, or in their journies by land or water? I queſtion not, but every impartial examiner would give us the preference in this particular †.

Thus, upon comparing the whole, it ſeems impoſſible to aſſign any juſt reaſon, why the world ſhould have been more populous in antient than in modern times. The equality of property, among the antients, liberty, and the ſmall diviſions of their ſtates, were indeed favourable to the propagation of mankind: But their wars were more bloody and deſtructive, their governments more factious and unſettled, commerce and manufactures more feeble and languiſhing, and the general police more looſe and irregular. Theſe latter diſadvantages ſeem to form a ſufficient counterbalance to the former advantages; and rather favour the oppoſite opinion to that which commonly prevails with regard to this ſubject.

† See Part I. Eſſay XII.

But there is no reaſoning, it may be ſaid, againſt matter of fact. If it appear, that the world was then more populous than at preſent, we may be aſſured, that our conjectures are falſe, and that we have overlooked ſome material circumſtance in the compariſon. This I readily own: All our preceding reaſonings, I acknowledge to be mere trifling, or, at leaſt, ſmall ſkirmiſhes and frivolous rencounters, which decide nothing. But unluckily the main combat, where we compare facts, cannot be rendered much more deciſive. The facts delivered by antient authors, are either ſo uncertain or ſo imperfect as to afford us nothing poſitive in this matter. How indeed could it be otherwiſe? The very facts which we muſt oppoſe to them, in computing the greatneſs of modern ſtates, are far from being either certain or compleat. Many grounds of calculation, proceeded on by celebrated writers, are little better than thoſe of the Emperor HELIOGABALUS, who formed an eſtimate of the immenſe greatneſs of ROME, from ten thouſand pound weight of cobwebs which had been found in that city †.

'Tis to be remarked, that all kinds of numbers are uncertain in antient manuſcripts, and have been ſubject to much greater corruptions than any other part of the text; and that for a very obvious reaſon. Any alteration, in other places, commonly affects the ſenſe or grammar, and is more readily perceived by the reader and tranſcriber.

Few enumerations of inhabitants have been made of any tract of country by any antient author of good authority, ſo as to afford us a large enough view for compariſon.

'Tis probable, that there was formerly a good foundation for the number of citizens aſſigned to any free city; becauſe they entered for a ſhare of the government, and

† ÆLII LAMPRID. *in vita* HELIOGAB. cap. 26.

there were exact regiſters kept of them. But as the number of ſlaves is ſeldom mentioned, this leaves us in as great uncertainty as ever, with regard to the populouſneſs even of ſingle cities.

The firſt page of THUCYDIDES is, in my opinion, the commencement of real hiſtory. All preceding narrations are ſo intermixed with fable, that philoſophers ought to abandon them, in a great meaſure, to the embelliſhment of poets and orators *.

With regard to remote times, the numbers of people aſſigned are often ridiculous, and loſe all credit and authority. The free citizens of SYBARIS, able to bear arms, and actually drawn out in battle, were 300,000. They encountred at SIAGRA with 100,000 citizens of CROTONA, another GREEK city contiguous to them; and were defeated. This is DIODORUS SICULUS's † account; and is very ſeriouſly inſiſted on by that hiſtorian. STRABO ‡ alſo mentions the ſame number of SYBARITES.

DIODORUS SICULUS §, enumerating the inhabitants of AGRIGENTUM, when it was deſtroyed by the CARTHAGINIANS, ſays, that they amounted to 20,000 citizens, 200,000 ſtrangers, beſides ſlaves, who, in ſo opulent a city as he repreſents it, would probably be, at

* In general, there is more candour and ſincerity in antient hiſtorians, but leſs exactneſs and care, than in the moderns. Our ſpeculative factions, eſpecially thoſe of religion, throw ſuch an illuſion over our minds, that men ſeem to regard impartiality to their adverſaries and to heretics, as a vice or weakneſs: But the commonneſs of books, by means of printing, has obliged modern hiſtorians to be more careful in avoiding contradictions and incongruities. DIODORUS SICULUS is a good writer; but 'tis with pain I ſee his narration contradict, in ſo many particulars, the two moſt authentic pieces of all GREEK hiſtory, *viz.* XENOPHON's expedition, and DEMOSTHENES's orations. PLUTARCH and APPIAN ſeem ſcarce ever to have read CICERO's epiſtles.

† Lib. 12. ‡ Lib. 6. § Lib. 13.

leaſt,

leaſt, as numerous. We muſt remark, that the women and the children are not included; and that therefore, upon the whole, the city muſt have contained near two millions of inhabitants *. And what was the reaſon of ſo immenſe an increaſe! They were very induſtrious in cultivating the neighbouring fields, not exceeding a ſmall ENGLISH county; and they traded with their wine and oil to AFRICA, which, at that time, had none of theſe commodities.

PTOLEMY, ſays THEOCRITUS †, commands 33,339 cities. I ſuppoſe the ſingularity of the number was the reaſon of aſſigning it. DIODORUS SICULUS ‡ aſſigns three millions of inhabitants to ÆGYPT, a very ſmall number: But then he makes the number of their cities amount to 18,000: An evident contradiction.

He ſays ‖, the people were formerly ſeven millions. Thus remote times are always moſt envied and admired.

That XERXES's army was extremely numerous, I can readily believe; both from the great extent of his empire, and from the fooliſh practice of the Eaſtern nations, of encumbering their camp with a ſuperfluous multitude: But will any rational man cite HERODOTUS's wonderful narrations as an authority? There is ſomething very rational, I own, in LYSIAS's § argument upon this ſubject. Had not XERXES's army been incredibly numerous, ſays he, he had never made a bridge over the HELLESPONT: It had been much eaſier to have tranſported his men over ſo ſhort a paſſage, with the numerous ſhipping of which he was maſter.

POLYBIUS ⸸ ſays, that the ROMANS, between the firſt and ſecond PUNIC wars, being threatened with an

* DIOGENES LAERTIUS *(in vita* EMPEDOCLIS) ſays, that AGRIGENTUM contained only 800,000 inhabitants.

† Idyll. 17. ‡ Lib. 1. ‖ Id. ibid.

§ *Orat. funebris.* ⸸ Lib. 2.

invaſion from the GAULS, muſtered all their own forces, and thoſe of their allies, and found them amount to ſeven hundred thouſand men able to bear arms. A great number ſurely, and which, when joined to the ſlaves, is probably not leſs, if not rather more than that extent of country affords at preſent *. The enumeration too ſeems to have been made with ſome exactneſs; and POLYBIUS gives us the detail of the particulars. But might not the number be magnified, in order to encourage the people?

DIODORUS SICULUS †, makes the ſame enumeration amount to near a million. Theſe variations are ſuſpicious. He plainly too ſuppoſes, that ITALY in his time was not ſo populous: Another very ſuſpicious circumſtance. For who can believe, that the inhabitants of that country diminiſhed from the time of the firſt PUNIC war to that of the *triumvirates*?

JULIUS CÆSAR, according to APPIAN ‡, encountered four millions of GAULS, killed one million, and took another million priſoners ‖. Suppoſing the number of the enemy's army and of the killed could be exactly aſſigned, which never is poſſible; how could it be known how often the ſame man returned into the armies, or how diſtinguiſh the new from the old levied ſoldiers? No attention ought ever to be given to ſuch looſe, exaggerated calculations; eſpecially where the author tells us not the mediums upon which the calculations were founded.

PATERCULUS § makes the number killed by CÆSAR amount only to 400,000: A much more probable ac-

* The country that ſupplied this number, was not above a third of ITALY, *viz.* the Pope's dominions, TUSCANY, and a part of the kingdom of NAPLES: But perhaps in thoſe early times there were very few ſlaves, except in Rome, or the great cities. † Lib. 2. ‡ CELTICA.

‖ PLUTARCH (*in vita* CÆS.) makes the number that CÆSAR fought with amount only to three millions; JULIAN. (*in* CÆSARIBUS) to two.

§ Lib. 2. cap. 47.

count,

count, and more easily reconciled to the history of these wars given by that conqueror himself in his Commentaries.

One would imagine, that every circumstance of the life and actions of DIONYSIUS the elder might be regarded as authentic, and free from all fabulous exaggeration; both because he lived at a time when letters flourished most in GREECE, and because his chief historian was PHILISTUS, a man allowed to be of great genius, and who was a courtier and minister of that prince. But can we admit, that he had a standing army of 100,000 foot, 10,000 horse, and a fleet of 400 gallies *? These, we may observe, were mercenary forces, and subsisted upon their pay, like our armies in EUROPE. For the citizens were all disarmed; and when DION afterwards invaded SICILY, and called on his countrymen to vindicate their liberty, he was obliged to bring arms along with him, which he distributed among those who joined him †. In a state where agriculture alone flourishes, there may be many inhabitants; and if these be all armed and disciplined, a great force may be called out upon occasion: But great numbers of mercenary troops can never be maintained, without either trade and manufactures, or very extensive dominions. The United Provinces never were masters of such a force by sea and land, as that which is said to belong to DIONYSIUS; yet they possess as large a territory, perfectly well cultivated, and have infinitely more resources from their commerce and industry. DIODORUS SICULUS allows, that, even in his time, the army of DIONYSIUS appeared incredible; that is, as I interpret it, it was entirely a fiction, and the opinion arose from the exaggerated flattery of the courtiers, and perhaps from the vanity and policy of the tyrant himself.

* DIOD. SIC. lib. 2. † PLUTARCH *in vita* DIONIS.

'Tis

'Tis a very uſual fallacy, to conſider all the ages of antiquity as one period, and to compute the numbers contained in the great cities mentioned by antient authors, as if theſe cities had been all cotemporary. The GREEK colonies flouriſhed extremely in SICILY during the age of ALEXANDER: But in AUGUSTUS's time they were ſo decayed, that almoſt all the product of that fertile iſland was conſumed in ITALY *.

Let us now examine the numbers of inhabitants aſſigned to particular cities in antiquity; and omitting the numbers of NINEVEH, BABYLON, and the EGYPTIAN THEBES, let us confine ourſelves to the ſphere of real hiſtory, to the GRECIAN and ROMAN ſtates. I muſt own, the more I conſider this ſubject, the more am I inclined to ſcepticiſm, with regard to the great populouſneſs aſcribed to antient times.

ATHENS is ſaid by PLATO † to be a very great city; and it was ſurely the greateſt of all the GREEK ‡ cities, except SYRACUSE, which was nearly about the ſame ſize in THUCYDIDES's ‖ time, and afterwards increaſed beyond it. For CICERO § mentions it as the greateſt of all the GREEK cities in his time; not comprehending, I ſuppoſe, either ANTIOCH or ALEXANDRIA under that denomination. ATHENÆUS ⁋ ſays, that, by the enumeration of DEMETRIUS PHALEREUS, there were in ATHENS 21,000 citizens, 10,000 ſtrangers, and 400,000 ſlaves. This number is very much inſiſted on by thoſe

* STRABO, lib. 6. † *Apoleg.* SOCR.

‡ ARGOS ſeems alſo to have been a great city: For LYSIAS contents himſelf with ſaying that it did not exceed ATHENS. Orat. 34.

‖ Lib. 6. See alſo PLUTARCH *in vita* NICIÆ.

§ *Orat. contra* VERREM, lib. 4. cap. 52. Strabo, lib. 6. ſays it was twenty-two miles in compaſs. But then we are to conſider, that it contained two harbours within it; one of which was a very large one, and might be regarded as a kind of bay.

⁋ Lib. 6. cap. 20.

whoſe

whose opinion I call in question, and is esteemed a fundamental fact to their purpose: But, in my opinion, there is no point of criticism more certain, than that ATHENÆUS, and CTESICLES, whom he cites, are here mistaken, and that the number of slaves is augmented by a whole cypher, and ought not to be regarded as more than 40,000.

First, When the number of citizens is said to be 21,000 by ATHENÆUS *, men of full age are only understood. For, (1.) HERODOTUS says †, that ARISTAGORAS, ambassador from the IONIANS, found it harder to deceive one SPARTAN than 30,000 ATHENIANS; meaning, in a loose way, the whole state, supposed to be met in one popular assembly, excluding the women and children. (2.) THUCYDIDES ‡ says, that, making allowance for all the absentees in the fleet, army, garrisons, and for people employed in their private affairs, the ATHENIAN assembly never rose to five thousand. (3.) The forces enumerated by the same historian §, being all citizens, and amounting to 13,000 heavy-armed infantry, prove the same method of calculation; as also the whole tenor of the GREEK historians, who always understand men of full age, when they assign the number of citizens in any republic. Now, these being but the fourth of the inhabitants, the free ATHENIANS were by this account 84,000; the strangers 40,000; and the slaves, calculating by the smaller number, and allowing that they married and propagated at the same rate with freemen, were 160,000; and the whole inhabitants 284,000: A large enough number surely. The other number, 1,720,000, makes ATHENS larger than LONDON and PARIS united.

Secondly, There were but 10,000 houses in ATHENS ‖.

* DEMOSTHENES assigns 20,000; *contra* ARISTOG.

† Lib. 5. ‡ Lib. 8.

§ Lib. 2. DIODORUS SICULUS's account perfectly agrees, lib. 12.

‖ XENOPHON. *Mem.* lib. 2.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Tho' the extent of the walls, as given us by THUCYDIDES *, be great, (*viz.* eighteen miles, beside the ſea-coaſt): yet XENOPHON † ſays, there was much waſte ground within the walls. They ſeemed indeed to have joined four diſtinct and ſeparate cities ‡.

Fourthly, No inſurrection of the ſlaves, nor ſuſpicion of inſurrection, are ever mentioned by hiſtorians; except one commotion of the miners §.

Fifthly, The ATHENIANS treatment of their ſlaves is ſaid by XENOPHON ‖, and DEMOSTHENES ¶, and PLAUTUS ‡, to have been extremely gentle and indulgent: Which could never have been the caſe, had the diſproportion been twenty to one. The diſproportion is not ſo great in any of our colonies; and yet we are obliged to exerciſe a very rigorous military government over the negroes.

Sixthly, No man is ever eſteemed rich for poſſeſſing what may be reckoned an equal diſtribution of property in any country, or even triple or quadruple that wealth. Thus every perſon in ENGLAND is computed by ſome to ſpend ſix-pence a-day: Yet is he eſteemed but poor who has five times that ſum. Now TIMARCHUS is ſaid by ÆSCHINES ‡‡ to have been left in eaſy circumſtances;

* Lib. 2. † *De rations red.*

‡ We are to obſerve, that when DIONYSIUS HALYCARNASSÆUS ſays, that if we regard the antient walls of ROME, the extent of the city will not appear greater than that of ATHENS; he muſt mean the ACROPOLIS and high town only. No antient author ever ſpeaks of the PYRÆUM, PHALERUS, and MUNYCHIA, as the ſame with ATHENS. Much leſs can it be ſuppoſed, that DIONYSIUS would conſider the matter in that light, after the walls of CIMON and PERICLES were deſtroyed, and ATHENS was entirely ſeparated from theſe other towns. This obſervation deſtroys all VOSSIUS's reaſonings, and introduces common ſenſe into theſe calculations.

§ ATHEN. lib. 6. ‖ *De rep.* ATHEN.

¶ PHILIP. 3. ‡ STICHO.

‡‡ *Contra* TIMARCH.

but

but he was master only of ten slaves employed in manufactures. LYSIAS and his brother, two strangers, were proscribed by the thirty for their great riches; tho' they had but sixty a-piece*. DEMOSTHENES was left very rich by his father; yet he had no more than fifty-two slaves †. His workhouse, of twenty cabinet-makers, is said to be a very considerable manufactory ‡.

Seventhly, During the DECELIAN war, as the GREEK historians call it, 20,000 slaves deserted, and brought the ATHENIANS to great distress, as we learn from THUCYDIDES §. This could not have happened, had they been only the twentieth part. The best slaves would not desert.

Eighthly, XENOPHON ‖ proposes a scheme for entertaining by the public 10,000 slaves: And that so great a number may possibly be supported, any one will be convinced, says he, who considers the numbers we possessed before the DECELIAN war. A way of speaking altogether incompatible with the larger number of ATHENÆUS.

Ninthly, The whole *census* of the state of ATHENS was less than 6000 talents. And tho' numbers in antient manuscripts be often suspected by critics, yet this is unexceptionable; both because DEMOSTHENES ¶, who gives it, gives also the detail, which checks him; and because POLYBIUS ‡‡ assigns the same number, and reasons upon it. Now, the most vulgar slave could yield by his labour an *obolus* a day, over and above his maintenance, as we learn from XENOPHON ǂ, who says, that NICIAS's overseer paid his master so much for slaves, whom he employed in digging of mines. If you will

* *Orat.* 11. † *Contra* APHOB. ‡ Ibid.
§ Lib. 7. ‖ *De rat. red.* ¶ *De classibus.*
‡‡ Lib. 2. cap. 62. ǂ *De rat. red.*

take

take the pains to eſtimate an *obolus* a day, and the ſlaves at 400,000, computing only at four years purchaſe, you will find the ſum above 12,000 talents; even tho' allowance be made for the great number of holidays in ATHENS. Beſides, many of the ſlaves would have a much greater value from their art. The loweſt that DEMOSTHENES eſtimates any of his * father's ſlaves, is two minas a-head. And upon this ſuppoſition, it is a little difficult, I confeſs, to reconcile even the number of 40,000 ſlaves with the *cenſus* of 6000 talents.

Tenthly, CHIOS is ſaid by THUCYDIDES †, to contain more ſlaves than any GREEK city, except SPARTA. SPARTA then had more than ATHENS, in proportion to the number of citizens. The SPARTANS were 9000 in the town, 30,000 in the country ‡. The male ſlaves, therefore, of full age, muſt have been more than 780,000; the whole more than 3,120,000. A number impoſſible to be maintained in a narrow barren country, ſuch as LACONIA, which had no trade. Had the HELOTES been ſo very numerous, the murder of 2000 mentioned by THUCYDIDES §, would have irritated them, without weakening them.

Beſides, we are to conſider, that the number aſſigned by ATHENÆUS ‖, whatever it is, comprehends all the inhabitants of ATTICA, as well as thoſe of ATHENS. The ATHENIANS affected much a country life, as we learn from THUCYDIDES ¶; and when they were all

* *Contra* APHOBUM. † Lib. 8.

‡ PLUTARCH. *in vita* LICURG. § Lib. 4.

‖ The ſame author affirms, that CORINTH had once 460,000 ſlaves, ÆGINA 470,000. But the foregoing arguments hold ſtronger againſt theſe facts, which are indeed entirely abſurd and impoſſible. 'Tis however remarkable, that ATHENÆUS cites ſo great an authority as ARISTOTLE for this laſt fact: And the ſcholiaſt on PINDAR mentions the ſame number of ſlaves in ÆGINA.

¶ Lib. 2.

chaſed

chaſed into town, by the invaſion of their territory during the PELOPONNESIAN war, the city was not able to contain them; and they were obliged to lie in the porticoes, temples, and even ſtreets, for want of lodging *.

The ſame remark is to be extended to all the other GREEK cities; and when the number of the citizens is aſſigned, we muſt always underſtand it of the inhabitants of the neighbouring country, as well as of the city. Yet, even with this allowance, it muſt be confeſſed, that GREECE was a populous country, and exceeded what we could imagine of ſo narrow a territory, naturally not very fertile, and which drew no ſupplies of corn from other places. For excepting ATHENS, which traded to PONTUS for that commodity, the other cities ſeem to have ſubſiſted chiefly from their neighbouring territory †.

RHODES is well known to have been a city of extenſive commerce, and of great fame and ſplendor; yet it contained only 6000 citizens able to bear arms, when it was beſieged by DEMETRIUS ‡.

THEBES was always one of the capital cities of GREECE §: But the number of its citizens exceeded not thoſe of RHODES ‖. PHLIASIA is ſaid to be a ſmall city

* THUCYD. lib. 2.

† DEMOST. *contra* LEPT. The ATHENIANS brought yearly from PONTUS 400,000 medimni or buſhels of corn, as appeared from the cuſtom-houſe books. And this was the greateſt part of their importation. This by the by is a ſtrong proof that there is ſome great miſtake in the foregoing paſſage of ATHENÆUS. For ATTICA itſelf was ſo barren in corn, that it produced not enough even to maintain the peaſants. TIT. LIV. lib. 43. cap. 6. LUCIAN, in his *navigium ſive vota*, ſays, that a ſhip, which by the dimenſions he gives, ſeems to have been about the ſize of our third rates, carried as much corn as would maintain all ATTICA for a twelve-month. But perhaps ATHENS was decayed at that time; and beſides, it is not ſafe to truſt ſuch looſe rhetorical calculations.

‡ DIOD. SIC. lib. 20. § ISOCR. *paneg.*

‖ DIOD. SIC. lib. 17. When ALEXANDER attacked THEBES, we may ſafely conclude, that almoſt all the inhabitants were preſent. Whoever is ac-

city by XENOPHON *, yet we find, that it contained 6000 citizens †. I pretend not to reconcile these two facts. Perhaps, XENOPHON calls PHLIASIA a small town, because it made but a small figure in GREECE, and maintained only a subordinate alliance with SPARTA; or perhaps the country belonging to it, was extensive, and most of the citizens were employed in the cultivation of it, and dwelt in the neighbouring villages.

MANTINEA was equal to any city in ARCADIA ‡: Consequently it was equal to MEGALOPOLIS, which was fifty stadia, or six miles and a quarter in circumference §. But MANTINÆA had only 3000 citizens ‖. The GREEK cities, therefore, contained often fields and gardens, together with the houses; and we cannot judge of them by the extent of their walls. ATHENS contained no more than 10,000 houses; yet its walls, with the sea-coast, were above twenty miles in extent. SYRACUSE was twenty-two miles in circumference; yet was scarce ever

acquainted with the spirit of the GREEKS, especially of the THEBANS, will never suspect, that any of them would desert their country, when it was reduced to such extreme peril and distress. As ALEXANDER took the town by storm, all those who bore arms were put to the sword without mercy; and they amounted only to 6000 men. Among these were some strangers and manumitted slaves. The captives, consisting of old men, women, children, and slaves, were sold, and they amounted to 30,000. We may therefore conclude that the free citizens in THEBES, of both sexes and all ages, were near 24,000; the strangers and slaves about 12,000. These last, we may observe, were somewhat fewer in proportion than at ATHENS; as is reasonable to imagine from this circumstance, that ATHENS was a town of more trade to support slaves, and of more entertainment to allure strangers. It is also to be remarked, that thirty-six thousand was the whole number of people, both in the city of THEBES, and the neighbouring territory: A very moderate number, it must be confessed; and this computation being founded in facts which appear undisputable, must have great weight in the present controversy. The above-mentioned number of RHODIANS too were all the inhabitants of the island, who were free, and able to bear arms.

* Hist. GRÆC. lib. 7. † Id. lib. 7. ‡ POLYB. lib. 2.
§ POLYB. lib. 9. cap. 20. ‖ LYSIAS, orat. 34.

spoke

ſpoke of by the antients as more populous than ATHENS. BABYLON was a ſquare of fifteen miles, or ſixty miles in circuit; but it contained large cultivated fields and incloſures, as we learn from PLINY. Tho' AURELIAN's wall was fifty miles in circumference *; the circuit of all the thirteen diviſions of ROME, taken apart, according to PUBLIUS VICTOR, was only about forty-three miles. When an enemy invaded the country, all the inhabitants retired within the walls of the antient cities, with their cattle and furniture, and inſtruments of huſbandry; and the great height to which the walls were raiſed, enabled a ſmall number to defend them with facility.

SPARTA, ſays XENOPHON †, is one of the cities of GREECE that has the feweſt inhabitants. Yet POLYBIUS ‡ ſays, that it was forty-eight ſtadia in circumference, and was round.

All the ÆTOLIANS able to bear arms in ANTIPATER's time, deducting ſome few garriſons, were but ten thouſand men §.

POLYBIUS ‖ tells us, that the ACHÆAN league might, without any inconvenience, march 30 or 40,000 men: And this account ſeems very probable: For that league comprehended the greateſt part of PELOPONNESUS. Yet PAUSANIAS ¶, ſpeaking of the ſame period, ſays, that all the ACHÆANS able to bear arms, even when ſeveral manumitted ſlaves were joined to them, did not amount to fifteen thouſand.

The THESSALIANS, till their final conqueſt by the ROMANS, were, in all ages, turbulent, factious, ſeditious, diſorderly †. 'Tis not therefore natural to ſup-

* VOPISCUS *in vita* AUREL.

† *De rep.* LACED. This paſſage is not eaſily reconciled with that of PLUTARCH above, who ſays, that SPARTA had 9000 citizens.

‡ POLYB. lib. 9. cap. 29.

§ DIOD. SIC. lib. 18. ‖ LEGAT. ¶ *In* ACHAICIS.

† TET. LIV. lib. 34. cap. 51. PLATO *in* CRITONE.

poſe, that that part of GREECE abounded much in people.

We are told by THUCYDIDES *, that the part of PELOPONNESUS adjoining to PYLOS, was deſart and uncultivated. HERODOTUS ſays †, that MACEDONIA was full of lions and wild bulls; animals which can only inhabit vaſt unpeopled foreſts. Theſe were the two extremities of GREECE.

All the inhabitants of EPIRUS, of all ages, ſexes and conditions, who were ſold by PAULUS ÆMILIUS, amounted only to 150,000 ‡. Yet EPIRUS might be double the extent of YORKSHIRE.

JUSTIN § tells us, that when PHILIP of MACEDON was declared head of the GREEK confederacy, he called a congreſs of all the ſtates, except the LACEDEMONIANS, who refuſed to concur; and he found the force of the whole, upon computation, to amount to 200,000 infantry, and 15,000 cavalry. This muſt be underſtood to be all the citizens capable of bearing arms. For as the GREEK republics maintained no mercenary forces, and had no militia diſtinct from the whole body of the citizens, it is not conceivable what other medium there could be of computation. That ſuch an army could ever by GREECE be brought into the field, and be maintained there, is contrary to all hiſtory. Upon this ſuppoſition, therefore, we may thus reaſon. The free GREEKS of all ages and ſexes were 860,000. The ſlaves, eſtimating them by the number of ATHENIAN ſlaves as above, who ſeldom married or had families, were double the male citizens of full age, *viz.* 430,000. And all the inhabitants of antient GREECE, excepting LACONIA, were about one million two hundred and

* Lib. 7. † Lib. 7.

‡ TIT. LIV. lib. 45. cap. 34. § Lib. 9. cap. 5.

ninety

ninety thouſand: No mighty number, nor exceeding what may be found at preſent in SCOTLAND, a country of not much greater extent, and very indifferently peopled.

We may now conſider the numbers of people in ROME and ITALY, and collect all the lights afforded us by ſcattered paſſages in antient authors. We ſhall find, upon the whole, a great difficulty in fixing any opinion on that head; and no reaſon to ſupport thoſe exaggerated calculations, ſo much inſiſted on by modern writers.

DIONYSIUS HALLICARNASSÆUS * ſays, that the antient walls of ROME were nearly of the ſame compaſs with thoſe of ATHENS, but that the ſuburbs ran out to a great extent; and it was difficult to tell, where the town ended or the country begun. In ſome places of ROME, it appears, from the ſame author †, from JUVENAL ‡, and from other antient writers §, that the houſes were high, and families lived in ſeparate ſtoreys, one above another: But it is probable, that theſe were only the poorer citizens, and only in ſome few ſtreets. If we may judge from the younger PLINY's ‖ account of his houſe,

* Lib. 4. † Lib. 10. ‡ Satyr. 3. l. 269, 270.

§ STRABO, lib. 5. ſays, that the emperor AUGUSTUS prohibited the raiſing houſes higher than ſeventy foot. In another paſſage, lib. 16, he ſpeaks of the houſes of ROME as remarkably high. See alſo to the ſame purpoſe VITRUVIUS, lib. 2. cap. 8. ARISTIDES the ſophiſt, in his oration εἰς Ρώμην, ſays, that ROME conſiſted of cities on the top of cities; and that if one were to ſpread it out, and unfold it, it would cover the whole ſurface of ITALY. Where an author indulges himſelf in ſuch extravagant declamations, and gives ſo much into the hyperbolical ſtyle, one knows not how far he muſt be reduced. But this reaſoning ſeems natural: If ROME was built in ſo ſcattered a manner as DIONYSIUS ſays, and ran ſo much into the country, there muſt have been very few ſtreets where the houſes were raiſed ſo high. 'Tis only for want of ground, that any body builds in that inconvenient manner.

† Lib. 2. epiſt. 16. lib. 5. epiſt. 6, 'Tis true, PLINY there deſcribes a country-houſe; But ſince that was the idea which the ancients formed of

houſe, and from BARTOLI's plans of antient buildings, the men of quality had very ſpacious palaces; and their buildings were like the CHINESE houſes at this day, where each apartment is ſeparated from the reſt, and riſes no higher than a ſingle ſtorey. To which if we add, that the ROMAN nobility much affected very extenſive porticoes, and even woods * in town; we may perhaps allow VOSSIUS (tho' there is no manner of reaſon for it) to read the famous paſſage of the elder PLINY † his own way without admitting the extravagant conſequences which he draws from it.

The

a magnificent and convenient building, the great men would certainly build the ſame way in town. "In laxitatem ruris excurrunt," ſays SENECA of the rich and voluptuous, epiſt. 114. VALERIUS MAXIMUS, lib. 4. cap. 4. ſpeaking of CINCINNATUS's field of four acres, ſays, "Auguſte ſe "habitare nunc putat, cujus domus tantum patet quantum CINCINNATI "rura patuerant." To the ſame purpoſe ſee lib. 36. cap. 15. alſo lib. 18. cap. 2.

* VITRUV. lib. 5. cap. 11. TACIT. annal. lib. 11. cap. 3. SUETON. *in vita* OCTAV. cap. 72, &c.

† "Mœnia ejus (ROMÆ) collegere ambitu imperatoribus, cenſoribuſque "VESPASIANIS, A. U. C. 828. paſſ. xiii. MCC. complexa montes "ſeptem, ipſa dividitur in regiones quatuordecim, compita earum 265. "Ejuſdem ſpatii menſura, currente a milliario in capite ROM. Fori ſtatuto, "ad ſingulas portas, quæ ſunt hodie numero 37, ita ut duodecim portæ ſe"mel numerentur, prætereanturque ex veteribus ſeptem, quæ eſſe deſie"runt, efficit paſſuum per directum 30,775. Ad extrema vero tecto"rum cum caſtris prætoriis ab eodem Milliario, per vicos omnium "viarum, menſura collegit paulo amplius ſeptuaginta millia paſſuum. Quo "ſi quis altitudinem tectorum addat, dignam profecto, æſtimationem con"cipiat, fateaturque nullius urbis magnitudinem in toto orbe potuiſſe ei "comparari." PLIN. lib. 3. cap. 5.

All the beſt manuſcripts of PLINY read the paſſage as here cited, and fix the compaſs of the walls of ROME to be thirteen miles. The queſtion is, What PLINY means by 30,775 paces, and how that number was formed? The manner in which I conceive it, is this. ROME was a ſemicircular area of thirteen miles circumference. The Forum, and conſequently the Milliarium, we know, was ſituated on the banks of the TYBER, and near the center of the circle, or upon the diameter of the ſemicircular area. Tho' there were thirty-ſeven gates to ROME, yet only twelve of them had ſtraight

ſtreets,

The number of citizens who received corn by the public diſtribution in AUGUSTUS's time, were two hundred thou-

ſtreets, leading from them to the Milliarium. PLINY, therefore, having aſſigned the circumference of ROME, and knowing that that alone was not ſufficient to give us a juſt notion of its ſurface, uſes this farther method. He ſuppoſes all the ſtreets, leading from the Milliarium to the twelve gates, to be laid together into one ſtraight line, and ſuppoſes we run along that line, ſo as to count each gate once: In which caſe, he ſays, that the whole line is 30,775 paces: Or, in other words, that each ſtreet or radius of the ſemicircular area is upon an average two miles and a half; and the whole length of ROME is five miles, and its breadth about half as much, beſides the ſcattered ſuburbs.

PERE HARDOUIN underſtands this paſſage in the ſame manner; with regard to the laying together the ſeveral ſtreets of ROME into one line, in order to compoſe 30,775 paces: But then he ſuppoſes, that ſtreets led from the Milliarium to every gate, and that no ſtreet exceeded 800 paces in length. But (1.) a ſemicircular area, whoſe radius was only 800 paces, could never have a circumference near thirteen miles, the compaſs of ROME as aſſigned by PLINY. A radius of two miles and a half forms very nearly that circumference. (2.) There is an abſurdity in ſuppoſing a city ſo built as to have ſtreets running to its center from every gate in its circumference. Theſe ſtreets muſt interfere as they approach. (3.) This diminiſhes too much from the greatneſs of ancient ROME, and reduces that city below even BRISTOL or ROTTERDAM.

The ſenſe which VOSSIUS in his *Obſervationes variæ* puts on this paſſage of PLINY, errs widely in the other extreme. One manuſcript, of no authority, inſtead of thirteen miles, has aſſigned thirty miles for the compaſs of the walls of ROME. And VOSSIUS underſtands this only of the curvilinear part of the circumference; ſuppoſing, that as the TYBER formed the diameter, there were no walls built on that ſide. But (1.) this reading is allowed contrary to almoſt all the manuſcripts. (2.) Why ſhould PLINY, a conciſe writer, repeat the compaſs of the walls of ROME in two ſucceſſive ſentences? (3.) Why repeat it with ſo ſenſible a variation? (4.) What is the meaning of PLINY's mentioning twice the MILLIARUM, if a line was meaſured that had no dependence on the MILLIARIUM? (5.) AURELIAN's wall is ſaid by VOPISCUS to have been drawn *laxiore ambitu*, and to have comprehended all the buildings and ſuburbs on the north ſide of the TYBER; yet its compaſs was only fifty miles; and even here critics ſuſpect ſome miſtake or corruption in the text. It is not probable, that ROME would diminiſh from AUGUSTUS to AURELIAN. It remained ſtill the capital of the ſame empire; and none of the civil wars in that long period, except the tumults on the death of MAXIMUS and

thouſand *. This one would eſteem a pretty certain ground of calculation: Yet it is attended with ſuch circumſtances as throw us back into doubt and uncertainty.

Did the poorer citizens only receive the diſtribution? It was calculated, to be ſure, chiefly for their benefit. But it appears from a paſſage in CICERO †, that the rich might alſo take their portion, and that it was eſteemed no reproach in them to apply for it.

To whom was the corn given; whether only to heads of families, or to every man, woman, and child? The portion every month was five *modii* to each ‡, (about $\frac{5}{6}$ of a buſhel.) This was too little for a family, and too much for an individual. A very accurate antiquarian ‖, therefore, infers, that it was given to every man of full years: But he allows the matter to be uncertain.

BALBINUS, ever affected the city. CARACALLA is ſaid by AURELIUS VICTOR to have increaſed ROME. (6.) There are no remains of ancient buildings, which mark any ſuch greatneſs of ROME. VOSSIUS's reply to this objection ſeems abſurd, That the rubbiſh would ſink ſixty or ſeventy feet below ground. It appears from SPARTIAN *(in vita Severi)* that the five-mile ſtone *in via Lavicana* was out of the city. (7.) OLYMPIODORUS and PUBLIUS VICTOR fix the number of houſes in ROME to be betwixt forty and fifty thouſand. (8.) The very extravagance of the conſequences drawn by this critic, as well as LIPSIUS, if they be neceſſary, deſtroys the foundation on which they are grounded: That ROME contained fourteen millions of inhabitants; while the whole kingdom of FRANCE contains only five, according to his computation, &c.

The only objection to the ſenſe which we have affix'd above to the paſſage of PLINY, ſeems to lie in this, That PLINY, after mentioning the thirty-ſeven gates of ROME, aſſigns only a reaſon for ſuppreſſing the ſeven old ones, and ſays nothing of the eighteen gates, the ſtreets leading from which terminated, according to my opinion, before they reached the Forum. But as PLINY was writing to the ROMANS, who perfectly knew the diſpoſition of the ſtreets, it is not ſtrange he ſhould take a circumſtance for granted, which was ſo familiar to every body. Perhaps too, many of theſe gates led to wharfs upon the river.

* *Ex monument. Ancyr.* † *Tuſc. quæſt.* lib. 3. cap. 48.

‡ *Licinius apud Salluſt. hiſt. frag.* lib. 3.

‖ *Nicolaus Hortenſius de re frumentaria Roman.*

Was

Was it ſtrictly inquired, whether the claimant lived within the precincts of ROME, or was it ſufficient that he preſented himſelf at the monthly diſtribution? This laſt ſeems more probable *.

Were there no falſe claimants? We are told †, that CÆSAR ſtruck off at once 170,000, who had crept in without a juſt title; and it is very little probable, that he remedied all abuſes.

But, laſtly, what proportion of ſlaves muſt we aſſign to theſe citizens? This is the moſt material queſtion; and the moſt uncertain. 'Tis very doubtful, whether ATHENS can be eſtabliſhed as a rule for ROME. Perhaps the ATHENIANS had more ſlaves, becauſe they employed them in manufactures, for which a capital city, like ROME, ſeems not ſo proper. Perhaps, on the other hand, the ROMANS had more ſlaves, on account of their ſuperior luxury and riches.

There were exact bills of mortality kept at ROME; but no antient author has given us the number of burials, except SUETONIUS ‡, who tells us, that in one ſeaſon there were 30,000 names carried to the temple of LIBETINA: But this was during a plague; which can afford no certain foundation for any inference.

The public corn, tho' diſtributed only to 200,000 citizens, affected very conſiderably the whole agriculture of ITALY ‖: A fact no way reconcilable to ſome modern exaggerations with regard to the inhabitants of that country.

* Not to take the people too much from their buſineſs, AUGUSTUS ordained the diſtribution of corn to be made only thrice a-year: But the people finding the monthly diſtributions more convenient, (as preſerving, I ſuppoſe, a more regular œconomy in their family) deſired to have them reſtored. SUETON. AUGUST. cap. 40. Had not ſome of the people come from ſome diſtance for their corn, AUGUSTUS's precaution ſeems ſuperfluous.

† *Sueton. in Jul.* cap. 41. ‡ *In vita Neronis.*

‖ *Sueton. Aug.* cap. 42.

The beſt ground of conjecture I can find concerning the greatneſs of antient ROME, is this: We are told by HERODIAN *, that ANTIOCH and ALEXANDRIA were very little inferior to ROME. It appears from DIODORUS SICULUS †, that one ſtraight ſtreet of ALEXANDRIA reaching from port to port, was five miles long; and as ALEXANDRIA was much more extended in length than breadth, it ſeems to have been a city nearly of the bulk of PARIS ‡; and ROME might be about the ſize of LONDON.

There lived in ALEXANDRIA, in DIODORUS SICULUS's time ‖, 300,000 free people, comprehending, I ſup-

* Lib. 4. cap. 5. † Lib. 17.

‡ QUINTUS CURTIUS ſays, its walls were only ten miles in circumference, when founded by ALEXANDER; lib. 4. cap. 8. STRABO, who had travelled to ALEXANDRIA, as well as DIODORUS SICULUS, ſays it was ſcarce four miles long, and in moſt places about a mile broad; lib. 17. PLINY ſays it reſembled a MACEDONIAN caſſock, ſtretching out in the corners; lib. 5. cap. 10. Notwithſtanding this bulk of ALEXANDRIA, which ſeems but moderate, DIODORUS SICULUS, ſpeaking of its circuit as drawn by ALEXANDER, (which it never exceeded, as we learn from AMMIANUS MARCELLINUS, lib. 22. cap. 16.) ſays it was μεγεθει διαφερουσα, *extremely great*, ibid. The reaſon why he aſſigns for its ſurpaſſing all cities of the world (for he excepts not ROME) is, that it contained 300,000 free inhabitants. He alſo mentions the revenues of the kings, *viz.* 6000 talents, as another circumſtance to the ſame purpoſe: No ſuch mighty ſum in our eyes, even though we make allowances for the different value of money. What STRABO ſays of the neighbouring country, means only that it was well peopled, οικουμενα καλως. Might not one affirm, without any great hyperbole, that the whole banks of the river from GRAVESEND to WINDSOR are one city? This is even more than STRABO ſays of the banks of the lake MAREOTIS, and of the canal to CANOPUS. 'Tis a vulgar ſaying in ITALY, that the King of SARDINIA has but one town in PIEDMONT; for it is all a town. AGRIPPA in JOSEPHUS *de bello* JUDAIC. lib. 2. cap. 16. to make his audience comprehend the exceſſive greatneſs of ALEXANDRIA, which he endeavours to magnify, deſcribes only the compaſs of the city as drawn by ALEXANDER: A clear proof that the bulk of the inhabitants were lodged there, and that the neighbouring country was no more than what might be expected about all great towns, very well cultivated, and well peopled.

‖ Lib. 17.

poſe,

poſe, women and children *. But what number of ſlaves? Had we any juſt ground to fix theſe at an equal number with the free inhabitants, it would favour the foregoing calculation.

There is a paſſage in HERODIAN, which is a little ſurpriſing. He ſays poſitively, that the palace of the Emperor was as large as all the reſt of the city †. This was NERO's golden houſe, which is indeed repreſented by SUETONIUS ‡ and PLINY as of an enormous extent ‖; but no power of imagination can make us conceive it to bear any proportion to ſuch a city as LONDON.

We may obſerve, had the hiſtorian been relating NERO's extravagance, and had he made uſe of ſuch an expreſſion, it would have had much leſs weight; theſe rhetorical exaggerations being ſo apt to creep into an author's ſtyle, even when the moſt chaſte and correct. But 'tis mentioned by HERODIAN only by the by, in relating the quarrels between GETA and CARACALLA.

* He ſays πλήθους, not ὄχλου, which laſt expreſſion muſt have been underſtood of citizens alone, and grown men.

† Lib. 4. cap. 1. πασης πόλεως. POLITIAN interprets it "ædibus majoribus quam reliqua urbe."

‡ He ſays (in NERONE cap. 39.) that a portico or piazza of it was 3000 feet long; "tanta laxitas ut porticus triplices milliarias haberet." He cannot mean three miles. For the whole extent of the houſe from the PALATINE to the ESQUILINE was not near ſo great. So when VOPISC. in AURELIANO mentions a portico in SALLUST's gardens, which he calls *porticus milliareuſis*, it muſt be underſtood of a thouſand feet. So alſo HORACE;

"Nulla decempedis
Metata privatis opacam
Porticus excipiebat Arcton." Lib. 2. ode 15.

So alſo in lib. 1. ſatyr. 8.

Mille pedes in fronte, trecentos cippus in agrum
Hic dabat."

‖ PLINIUS, lib. 36. cap. 15. "Bis vidimus urbem totam cingi domibus principum, CAII ac NERONIS."

It

It appears from the ſame hiſtorian *, that there was then much land uncultivated, and put to no manner of uſe; and he aſcribes it as a great praiſe to PERTINAX, that he allowed every one to take ſuch land either in ITALY or elſewhere, and cultivate it as he pleaſed, without paying any taxes. *Lands uncultivated, and put to no manner of uſe!* This is not heard of in any part of CHRISTENDOM; except perhaps in ſome remote parts of HUNGARY; as I have been informed. And it ſurely correſponds very ill with that idea of the extreme populouſneſs of antiquity, ſo much inſiſted on.

We learn from VOPISCUS †, that there was in ETRURIA much fertile land uncultivated, which the Emperor AURELIAN intended to convert into vineyards, in order to furniſh the ROMAN people with a gratuitous diſtribution of wine: A very proper expedient to diſpeople ſtill farther that capital and all the neighbouring territories.

It may not be amiſs to take notice of the account which POLYBIUS ‡ gives of the great herds of ſwine to be met with in TUSCANY and LOMBARDY, as well as in GREECE, and of the method of feeding them which was then practiſed. "There are great herds of ſwine," ſays he, "throughout all ITALY, particularly in former "times, thro' ETRURIA and CISALPINE GAUL. And "a herd frequently contains a thouſand or more ſwine. "When one of theſe herds in feeding meets with ano-"ther, they mix together; and the ſwine-herds have "no other expedient to ſeparate them than to go to dif-"ferent quarters, where they ſound their horn; and "theſe animals, being accuſtomed to that ſignal, run "immediately each to the horn of his own keeper. "Whereas in GREECE, if the herds of ſwine happen to "mix in the foreſts, he who has the greateſt flock, takes

* Lib. 2. cap. 15. † In AURELIAN. cap. 48.
‡ Lib. 12. cap. 2.

"cunningly the opportunity of driving all away. And "thieves are very apt to purloin the ſtraggling hogs, "which have wandered to a great diſtance from their "keeper in ſearch of food.

May we not infer from this account, that the north of ITALY was then much leſs peopled, and worſe cultivated, than at preſent? How could theſe vaſt herds be fed in a country ſo thick of incloſures, ſo improved by agriculture, ſo divided by farms, ſo planted with vines and corn intermingled together? I muſt confeſs, that POLYBIUS's relation has more the air of that œconomy which is to be met with in our AMERICAN colonies, than the management of an EUROPEAN country.

We meet with a reflection in ARISTOTLE's * ethics, which ſeems to me unaccountable on any ſuppoſition, and by proving too much in favour of our preſent reaſoning, may be thought really to prove nothing. That philoſopher, treating of friendſhip, and obſerving, that that relation ought neither to be contracted to a very few, nor extended over a great multitude, illuſtrates his opinion by the following argument. "In like manner," ſays he, "as a city cannot ſubſiſt, if it either have ſo few "inhabitants as ten, or ſo many as a hundred thouſand; "ſo is there a mediocrity required in the number of "friends; and you deſtroy the eſſence of friendſhip by "running into either extreme." What! impoſſible that a city can contain a hundred thouſand inhabitants! Had ARISTOTLE never ſeen nor heard of a city which was near ſo populous? This, I muſt own, paſſes my comprehenſion.

PLINY † tells us that SELEUCIA, the ſeat of the GREEK empire in the Eaſt, was reported to contain 600,000

* Lib. 9. cap. 10. His expreſſion is ἀνθρώπων, not πολιτῶν; inhabitants, not citizen.

† Lib. 6. cap 28.

people.

people. CARTHAGE is said by STRABO * to have contained 700,000. The inhabitants of PEKIN are not much more numerous. LONDON, PARIS, and CONSTANTINOPLE, may admit of nearly the same computation; at least, the two latter cities do not exceed it. ROME, ALEXANDRIA, ANTIOCH, we have already spoke of. From the experience of past and present ages, one might conjecture, that there is a kind of impossibility, that any city could ever rise much beyond this proportion. Whether the grandeur of a city be founded on commerce or on empire, there seem to be invincible obstacles, which prevent its farther progress. The seats of vast monarchies, by introducing extravagant luxury, irregular expence, idleness, dependence, and false ideas of rank and superiority, are improper for commerce. Extensive commerce checks itself, by raising the price of all labour and commodities. When a great court engages the attendance of a numerous nobility, possessed of overgrown fortunes, the middling gentry remain in their provincial towns, where they can make a figure on a moderate income. And if the dominions of a state arrive at an enormous size, there necessarily arise many capitals, in the remoter provinces, whither all the inhabitants except a few courtiers, repair, for education, fortune, and amusement †. LONDON, by uniting extensive commerce and middling empire, has, perhaps, arrived at a greatness, which no city will ever be able to exceed.

Chuse DOVER or CALAIS for a center: Draw a circle of two hundred miles radius: You comprehend LONDON, PARIS, the NETHERLANDS, the UNITED PROVINCES, and some of the best cultivated counties of FRANCE and

* Lib. 17.

† Such were ALEXANDRIA, ANTIOCH, CARTHAGE, EPHESUS, LYONS, &c. in the ROMAN empire. Such are even BOURDEAUX, THOLOUSE, DIJON, RENNES, ROUEN, AIX, &c. in FRANCE; DUBLIN, EDINBURGH, YORK, in the BRITISH dominions.

ENG-

ENGLAND. It may ſafely, I think, be affirmed that no ſpot of ground can be found, in antiquity, of equal extent, which contained near ſo many great and populous cities, and was ſo ſtocked with riches and inhabitants. To balance, in both periods, the ſtates, which poſſeſſed moſt art, knowledge, civility, and the beſt police, ſeems the trueſt method of compariſon.

'Tis an obſervation of L'ABBE DU BOS *, that ITALY is warmer at preſent than it was in antient times. "The "annals of ROME tell us," ſays he, "that in the year "480 *ab U. C.* the winter was ſo ſevere that it deſtroyed "the trees. The TYBER froze in ROME, and the "ground was covered with ſnow for forty days. When "JUVENAL † deſcribes a ſuperſtitious woman, he repre-"ſents her as breaking the ice of the TYBER, that ſhe "might perform her ablutions.

"*Hybernum fracta glacie deſcendet in amnem,*
"*Ter matutino Tyberi mergetur.*

"He ſpeaks of that river's freezing as a common event. "Many paſſages of HORACE ſuppoſe the ſtreets of ROME "full of ſnow and ice. We ſhould have more cer-"tainty with regard to this point, had the ancients "known the uſe of thermometers: But their writers, "without intending it, give us information, ſufficient "to convince us, that the winters are now much more "temperate at ROME than formerly. At preſent, the "TYBER no more freezes at ROME than the NILE at "CAIRO. The ROMANS eſteem the winter very ri-"gorous, if the ſnow lies two days, and if one ſees for "eight and forty hours a few icicles hang from a foun-"tain that has a north expoſition.

The obſervation of this ingenious critic may be extended to other EUROPEAN climates. Who could diſ-

* Vol. 2. § 16. † Sat. 6.

over

over the mild climate of FRANCE in DIODORUS SICULUS's * deſcription of that of GAUL? "As it is a "northern climate," ſays he, "it is infeſted with cold "to an extreme degree. In cloudy weather, inſtead of "rain, there fall great ſnows; and in clear weather it "there freezes ſo exceſſive hard, that the rivers acquire "bridges of their own ſubſtance, over which, not on-"ly ſingle travellers may paſs, but large armies, ac-"companied with all their baggage and loaded wag-"gons. And there being many rivers in GAUL, the "RHONE, the RHINE, &c. almoſt all of them are froze "over; and 'tis uſual, in order to prevent falling, to "cover the ice with chaff and ſtraw at the places where "the road paſſes." *Colder than a* GALLIC *Winter*, is uſed by PETRONIUS, as a proverbial expreſſion.

North of the CEVENNES, ſays STRABO †, GAUL produces not figs and olives: And the vines, which have been planted, bear not grapes, that will ripen.

OVID poſitively maintains, with all the ſerious affirmation of proſe, that the EUXINE ſea was frozen over every winter in his time; and he appeals to ROMAN governours, whom he names, for the truth of his aſſertion ‡. This ſeldom or never happens at preſent in the latitude of TOMI, whither OVID was baniſhed. All the complaints of the ſame poet ſeem to mark a rigour of the ſeaſons, which is ſcarce experienced at preſent in PETERSBURG or STOCKHOLM.

TOURNEFORT, a *Provencal*, who had travelled into the ſame countries, obſerves, that there is not a finer climate in the world: And he aſſerts, that nothing but OVID's melancholy could have given him ſuch diſmal ideas of it.

* Lib. 4. † Lib. 4.

‡ *Triſt.* lib. 3. eleg. 9. *De Ponto*, lib. 4. eleg. 7, 9, 10.

But

But the facts mentioned by that poet, are too circumſtantial to bear any ſuch interpretation.

POLYBIUS * ſays, that the climate in ARCADIA was very cold, and the air moiſt.

"ITALY," ſays VARRO †, "is the moſt temperate "climate in EUROPE. The inland parts" (GAUL, GERMANY, and PANNONIA, no doubt) "have almoſt per-"petual winter."

The northern parts of SPAIN, according to STRABO ‡, are but ill inhabited, becauſe of the great cold.

Allowing, therefore, this remark to be juſt, that EUROPE is become warmer than formerly; how can we account for it? Plainly, by no other method, but by ſuppoſing, that the land is at preſent much better cultivated, and that the woods are cleared, which formerly threw a ſhade upon the earth, and kept the rays of the ſun from penetrating to it. Our northern colonies in AMERICA become more temperate, in proportion as the woods are felled §; but in general, every one may remark, that cold ſtill makes itſelf much more ſeverely felt, both in North and South AMERICA, than in places under the ſame latitude in EUROPE.

SASERNA, quoted by COLUMELLA ‖, affirmed, that the diſpoſition of the heavens was altered before his time, and that the air had become much milder and warmer; as appears hence, ſays he, that many places now abound with vineyards and olive plantations, which formerly, by reaſon of the rigour of the climate, could raiſe none of theſe

* Lib. 4. cap. 21. † Lib. 1. cap. 2. ‡ Lib. 3.

§ The warm ſouthern colonies alſo become more healthful: And 'tis remarkable, that in the SPANISH hiſtories of the firſt diſcovery and conqueſt of theſe countries, they appear to have been very healthful; being then well peopled and cultivated. No account of the ſickneſs or decay of CORTES's or PIZZARRO's ſmall armies.

‖ Lib. 1. cap. 1.

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productions. Such a change, if real, will be allowed an evident ſign of the better cultivation and peopling of countries before the age of SASERNA *; and if it be continued to the preſent times, is a proof, that theſe advantages have been continually increaſing throughout this part of the world.

Let us now caſt our eye over all the countries which were the ſcene of antient and modern hiſtory, and compare their paſt and preſent ſituation: We ſhall not, perhaps, find ſuch foundation for the complaint of the preſent emptineſs and deſolation of the world. ÆGYPT is repreſented by MAILLET, to whom we owe the beſt account of it, as extremely populous; tho' he eſteems the number of its inhabitants to be diminiſhed. SYRIA, and the Leſſer ASIA, as well as the coaſt of BARBARY, I can readily own, to be very deſart in compariſon of their antient condition. The depopulation of GREECE is alſo very obvious. But whether the country now called TURKY in EUROPE may not, in general, contain as many inhabitants as during the flouriſhing period of GREECE, may be a little doubtful. The THRACIANS ſeem then to have lived like the TARTARS at preſent, by paſturage and plunder †: The GETES were ſtill more uncivilized ‡: And the ILLYRIANS were no better §. Theſe occupy nine tenths of that country: And tho' the government of the TURKS be not very favourable to induſtry and propagation; yet it preſerves at leaſt peace and order among the inhabitants; and is preferable to that barbarous, unſettled condition in which they antiently lived.

POLAND and MUSCOVY in EUROPE are not populous; but are certainly much more ſo than the antient SARMA-

* He ſeems to have lived about the time of the younger AFRICANUS; lib. 1. cap. 1.

† *Xenoph. exp.* lib. 7. *Polyb.* lib. 4. cap. 45.

‡ *Ovid paſſim, &c. Strabo*, lib. 7. § *Polyb.* lib. 2. cap. 12.

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TEA and SCYTHIA; where no husbandry or tillage was ever heard of, and pasturage was the sole art by which the people were maintained. The like observation may be extended to DENMARK and SWEDEN. No one ought to esteem the immense swarms of people, which formerly came from the North, and over-ran all EUROPE, to be any objection to this opinion. Where a whole nation, or even half of it remove their seat; 'tis easy to imagine, what a prodigious multitude they must form; with what desperate valour they must make their attacks; and how the terror they strike into the invaded nations will make these magnify, in their imagination, both the courage and multitude of the invaders. SCOTLAND is neither extensive nor populous; but were the half of its inhabitants to seek new seats, they would form a colony as large as the TEUTONS and CIMBRI; and would shake all EUROPE, supposing it in no better condition for defence than formerly.

GERMANY has surely at present twenty times more inhabitants than in antient times, when they cultivated no ground, and each tribe valued itself on the extensive desolation which it spread around; as we learn from CÆSAR *, and TACITUS †, and STRABO ‡. A proof, that the division into small republics will not alone render a nation populous, unless attended with the spirit of peace, order, and industry.

The barbarous condition of BRITAIN in former times is well known, and the thinness of its inhabitants may easily be conjectured, both from their barbarity, and from a circumstance mentioned by HERODIAN §, that all BRITAIN was marshy, even in SEVERUS's time, after the ROMANS had been fully settled in it above a whole century.

* *De bello Gallico*, lib. 6. † *De moribus Germ.* ‡ Lib. 7.
§ Lib. 3. cap. 47.

'Tis not eaſily imagined, that the GAULS were anciently much more advanced in the arts of life than their northern neighbours; ſince they travelled to this iſland for their education in the myſteries of the religion and philoſophy of the DRUIDS *. I cannot, therefore, think, that GAUL was then near ſo populous as FRANCE is at preſent.

Were we to believe, indeed, and join together the teſtimony of APPIAN, and that of DIODORUS SICULUS, we muſt admit an incredible populouſneſs in GAUL. The former hiſtorian † ſays, that there were 400 nations in that country; the latter ‡ affirms, that the largeſt of the GALLIC nations conſiſted of 200,000 men, beſides women and children, and the leaſt of 50,000. Calculating, therefore, at a medium, we muſt admit of near 200 millions of people, in a country, which we eſteem populous at preſent, tho' ſuppoſed to contain little more than twenty §. Such calculations, therefore, by their extravagance loſe all manner of authority. We may obſerve, that that equality of property, to which the populouſneſs of antiquity may be aſcribed, had no place among the GAULS ‖. Their inteſtine wars alſo, before CÆSAR's time, were almoſt perpetual ⁋. And STRABO ** obſerves, that tho' all GAUL was cultivated, yet it was not cultivated with any ſkill or care; the genius of the inhabitants leading them leſs to arts than arms, till their ſlavery to ROME produced peace among themſelves.

CÆSAR †† enumerates very particularly the great forces which were levied at BELGIUM to oppoſe his conqueſts; and makes them amount to 208,000. Theſe were not

* CÆSAR *de bello Gallico*; lib. 16. STRABO, lib. 7. ſays, the GAULS were not much more improved than the GERMANS.

† Celt. pars 1. ‡ Lib. 5.

§ Antient GAUL was more extenſive than modern FRANCE.

‖ *Cæſar de bello Gallico*; lib. 6. ⁋ *Id. Ibid.* ** Lib. 4.

†† *De bello Gallico*; lib. 2.

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the whole people able to bear arms in BELGIUM: For the ſame hiſtorian tells us, that the BELLOVACI could have brought a hundred thouſand men into the field, tho' they engaged only for ſixty. Taking the whole, therefore, in this proportion of ten to ſix, the ſum of fighting men in all the ſtates of BELGIUM was about 350,000; all the inhabitants a million and a half. And BELGIUM being about the fourth of GAUL, that country might contain ſix millions, which is not the third of its preſent inhabitants †. We are informed by CÆSAR, that the GAULS had no fixed property in land; but that the chieftains, when any death happened in a family, made a new diviſion of all the lands among the ſeveral members of the family. This is the cuſtom of *Taniſtry*, which ſo long prevailed in IRELAND; and which retained that country in a ſtate of miſery, barbariſm, and deſolation.

The antient HELVETIA was 250 miles in length, and 180 in breadth, according to the ſame author ‡; yet contained only 360,000 inhabitants. The canton of BERNE alone has, at preſent, as many people.

After this computation of APPIAN and DIODORUS SICULUS, I know not, whether I dare affirm, that the modern DUTCH are more numerous than the antient BATAVI.

† It appears from CÆSAR's account, that the GAULS had no domeſtic ſlaves, who formed a different order from the *Plebes*. The whole common people were indeed a kind of ſlaves to the nobility, as the people of POLAND are at this day: And a nobleman of GAUL had ſometimes ten thouſand dependants of this kind. Nor can we doubt, that the armies were compoſed of the people as well as of the nobility: An army of 100,000 noblemen from a very ſmall ſtate is incredible. The fighting men amongſt the HELVETII were the fourth part of the whole inhabitants; a clear proof that all the males of military age bore arms. See CÆSAR *de bello Gall.* lib. 1.

We may remark, that the numbers in CÆSAR's commentaries can be more depended on than thoſe of any other antient author, becauſe of the GREEK tranſlation, which ſtill remains, and which checks the LATIN original.

‡ *De bello Gallico*; lib. 1.

SPAIN is decayed from what it was three centuries ago; but if we ſtep backward two thouſand years, and conſider the reſtleſs, turbulent, unſettled condition of its inhabitants, we may probably be inclined to think, that it is now much more populous. Many SPANIARDS killed themſelves when deprived of their arms by the ROMANS *. It appears from PLUTARCH †, that robbery and plunder were eſteemed honourable among the SPANIARDS. HIRTIUS ‡ repreſents in the ſame light the ſituation of that country in CÆSAR's time; and he ſays, that every man was obliged to live in caſtles and walled towns for his ſecurity. It was not till its final conqueſt under AUGUSTUS, that theſe diſorders were repreſſed §. The account which STRABO ‖ and JUSTIN ⁋ give of SPAIN, correſponds exactly with thoſe above mentioned. How much, therefore, muſt it diminiſh from our idea of the populouſneſs of antiquity, when we find, that CICERO, comparing ITALY, AFRIC, GAUL, GREECE, and SPAIN, mentions the great number of inhabitants, as the peculiar circumſtance which rendered this latter country formidable **.

ITALY, 'tis probable however, has decayed: But how many great cities does it ſtill contain? VENICE, GENOA, PAVIA, TURIN, MILAN, NAPLES, FLORENCE, LEGHORN, which either ſubſiſted not in antient times, or were then very inconſiderable? If we reflect on this, we ſhall not be apt to carry matters to ſo great an extreme as is uſual, with regard to this ſubject.

* *Titi Livii*; lib. 34. cap. 17. † *In vita Marii.* ‡ *De bello Hiſp.*
§ *Vell. Paterc.* lib. 2. § 90. ‖ Lib. 3. ⁋ Lib. 44.

** "Nec numero Hiſpanos, nec robore Gallos, nec calliditate Pœnos, nec "artibus Græcos, nec denique hoc ipſo hujus gentis, ac terræ domeſtico "natívoque ſenſu, Italos ipſos ac Latinos—ſuperavimus." *De haruſp. reſp.* cap. 9. The diſorders of SPAIN ſeem to have been almoſt proverbial: "Nec "impacatos a tergo horrebis Iberos." *Virg. Georg.* lib. 3. The IBERI are here plainly taken, by a poetical figure, for robbers in general.

When

When the ROMAN authors complain, that ITALY, which formerly exported corn, became dependent on all the provinces for its daily bread, they never aſcribe this alteration to the increaſe of its inhabitants, but to the neglect of tillage and agriculture †. A natural effect of that pernicious practice of importing corn, in order to diſtribute it *gratis* among the ROMAN citizens, and a very bad means of multiplying the inhabitants of any country ‡. The *ſportula*, ſo much talked of by MARTIAL and JUVENAL, being preſents regularly made by the great lords to their ſmaller clients, muſt have had a like tendency to produce idleneſs, debauchery, and a continual decay among the people. The pariſh-rates have at preſent the ſame bad conſequences in ENGLAND.

Were I to aſſign a period, when I imagine this part of the world might poſſibly contain more inhabitants than at preſent, I ſhould pitch upon the age of TRAJAN and the ANTONINES; the great extent of the ROMAN empire being then civilized and cultivated, ſettled almoſt in a profound peace both foreign and domeſtic, and living under the ſame regular police and government ‖. But we

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† VARRO *de re ruſtica*, lib. 2. præf. COLUMELLA præf. SUETON. AUGUST. cap. 42.

‡ Tho' the obſervations of L'Abbé du Bos ſhould be admitted, that ITALY is now warmer than in former times, the conſequence may not be neceſſary, that it is more populous or better cultivated. If the other countries of EUROPE were more ſavage and woody, the cold winds that blew from them, might affect the climate of ITALY.

‖ The inhabitants of MARSEILLES loſt not their ſuperiority over the GAULS in commerce and the mechanic arts, till the ROMAN dominion turned the latter from arms to agriculture and civil life. See STRABO, Lib. 4. That author, in ſeveral places, repeats the obſervation concerning the improvement ariſing from the ROMAN arts and civility: And he lived at the time when the change was new, and would be more ſenſible. So alſo PLINY: "Quis enim non, communicato orbe terrarum, majeſtate ROMANI "imperii, profeciſſe vitam putet, commercio rerum ac ſocietate feſtæ pacis, "omniaque etiam, quæ occulta antea fuerant, in promiſcuo uſu facta. Lib.

are told, that all extensive governments, especially absolute monarchies, are destructive to population, and contain

"14. proœm. Numine deûm electa (speaking of ITALY) quæ cœlum ipsum clarius faceret, sparsa congregaret imperia, ritusque molliret, & tot populorum discordes, ferasque linguas sermonis commercio contraheret ad colloquia, & humanitatem hominibus daret; breviterque, ut dixi, unam cognationem gentium in toto orbe patria fieret." lib. 2. cap. 1. Nothing can be stronger to this purpose than the following passage from TERTULLIAN, who lived about the age of SEVERUS. "Certe quidem ipse orbis in promptu est, cultior & de die & instructior primitus. Omnia jam perviæ, omnia nota, omnia negotiosa. Solitudines fabulosæ nemora, feræ audientissimi nostri literaverunt, silvas arva domuerunt, feras pecora fugaverunt; arenæ seruntur, saxa panguntur, paludes eliquantur, tantæ urbes, quantæ non casæ quondam. Jam nec insulæ horrent, nec scopuli terrent; ubique domus, ubique populus, ubique respublica, ubique vitæ. Solemnia nascendi, minus frequentia humanæ, onerosi sumus mundo, vix nobis elementa sufficiunt; & necessitates arctiores, & querelæ apud omnes, dum jam nos natura non sustinet." De anima, cap. 30. The air of rhetoric and declamation which appears in this passage, diminishes somewhat from its authority, but does not entirely destroy it. The same remark may be extended to the following passage of ARISTIDES the sophist, who lived in the age of ADRIAN. "The whole world," says he, addressing himself to the ROMANS, "seems to keep one holiday; and mankind, laying aside their former "which they formerly wore, now betake themselves to feasting and to joy. "The cities, forgetting their antient contentions, preserve only one emulation, which shall embellish itself most by every art and ornament? "Theatres every where arise, amphitheatres, porticoes, aqueducts, temples, "schools, academies; and one may safely pronounce, that the finishing "world has been again raised by your auspicious empire. Nor have cities "alone received an increase of ornament and beauty; but the whole earth, "like a garden or paradise, is cultivated and adorned: Inhumane, rude, "of mankind as are placed out of the limits of your empire (who are but "few) seem to merit our sympathy and compassion."

'Tis remarkable, that tho' DIODORUS SICULUS makes the inhabitants of ÆGYPT, when conquered by the ROMANS, amount only to three millions; yet JOSEPH. *de bello Jud.* lib. 2. cap. 16. says, that its inhabitants, excluding those of ALEXANDRIA, were seven millions and a half, in the reign of NERO: And he expressly says, that he drew this account from the books of the ROMAN publicans, who levied the poll-tax. STRABO, lib. 17. praises the superior police of the ROMANS with regard to the finances of ÆGYPT, above that of its former monarchs: And no part of administration is more essential to the happiness of a people. Yet we read in ATHENÆUS, (lib. 1. cap. 25.) who flourished during the reign of the ANTONINES, that

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tain a secret vice and poison, which destroy the effect of all these promising appearances *. To confirm this, there is a passage cited from PLUTARCH †, which being somewhat singular, we shall here examine it.

That author, endeavouring to account for the silence of many of the oracles, says, that it may be abscribed to the present desolation of the world, proceeding from former wars and factions; which common calamity, he adds, has fallen heavier upon GREECE than on any other country; insomuch, that the whole could scarce at present furnish three thousand warriors; a number which, in the time of the MEDIAN war, were supplied by the single city of MEGARA. The gods, therefore, who affect works of dignity and importance, have suppressed many of their oracles, and deign not to use so many interpreters of their will to so diminutive a people.

I must confess, that this passage contains so many difficulties, that I know not what to make of it. You may observe, that PLUTARCH assigns, for a cause of the decay of mankind, not the extensive dominion of the ROMANS, but the former wars and factions of the several nations; all which were quieted by the ROMAN arms. PLUTARCH's reasoning, therefore, is directly contrary to the inference which is drawn from the fact he advances.

POLYBIUS supposes, that GREECE had become more prosperous and flourishing after the establishment of the

the town MARZIA, near ALEXANDRIA, which was formerly a large city, had dwindled into a village. This is not, properly speaking, a contradiction. SUIDAS (AUGUST.) says, that the Emperor AUGUSTUS, having numbered the whole ROMAN empire, found it contained only 4,101,017 men (ἀνδρες). There is here surely some great mistake, either in the author or transcriber. But this authority, feeble as it is, may be sufficient to counterbalance the exaggerated accounts of HERODOTUS and DIODORUS SICULUS with regard to more early times.

* *L'Esprit des loix*, liv. 23. chap. 19.

† *De oracc. defectu.*

ROMAN yoke *; and tho' that historian wrote before these conquerors had degenerated, from being the patrons, to be the plunderers of mankind; yet as we find from TACITUS †, that the severity of the emperors afterwards corrected the licence of the governors, we have no reason to think that extensive monarchy so destructive as it is so often represented.

We learn from STRABO ‡, that the ROMANS, from their regard to the GREEKS, maintained, to his time, most of the privileges and liberties of that celebrated nation; and NERO afterwards rather increased them §. How therefore can we imagine, that the ROMAN yoke was so burdensome over that part of the world? The oppression of the proconsuls was checked; and the magistracies in GREECE being all bestowed, in the several cities, by the free votes of the people, there was no great necessity for the competitors to attend the emperor's court. If great numbers went to seek their fortunes in ROME, and advance themselves by learning or eloquence, the commodities of their native country, many of them would return with the fortunes which they had acquired, and thereby enrich the GRECIAN commonwealths.

But PLUTARCH says, that the general depopulation had been more sensibly felt in GREECE than in any other country. How is this reconcileable to its superior privileges and advantages?

* Lib. 3. cap. 62. It may perhaps be imagined, that POLYBIUS, being dependent on ROME, would naturally extol the ROMAN dominion. But, in the *first* place, POLYBIUS, tho' one sees sometimes instances of his candor, discovers no symptoms of flattery. *Secondly*, This opinion is only delivered in a single stroke, by the by, while he is intent upon another subject; and 'tis allowed, if there be any suspicion of an author's insincerity, that these oblique propositions discover his real opinion better than his more formal and direct assertions.

† *Annal.* lib. 3. cap. 2. ‡ Lib. 8. and 9.

§ PLUTARCH. *De his qui sero a Numine punniuntur.*

Besides,

Besides, this passage, by proving too much, really proves nothing. *Only three thousand men able to bear arms in all* GREECE! Who can admit so strange a proposition, especially if we consider the great number of GREEK cities, whose names still remain in history, and which are mentioned by writers long after the age of PLUTARCH? There are there surely ten times more people at present, when there scarce remains a city in all the bounds of antient GREECE. That country is still tolerably cultivated, and furnishes a sure supply of corn, in case of any scarcity in SPAIN, ITALY, or the south of FRANCE.

We may observe, that the antient frugality of the GREEKS, and their equality of property, still subsisted during the age of PLUTARCH; as appears from LUCIAN §. Nor is there any ground to imagine, that that country was possessed by a few masters, and a great number of slaves.

'Tis probable, indeed, that military discipline, being intirely useless, was extremely neglected in GREECE after the establishment of the ROMAN empire; and if these commonwealths, formerly so warlike and ambitious, maintained each of them a small city-guard, to prevent mobbish disorders, 'tis all they had occasion for: And these, perhaps, did not amount to 3000 men, throughout all GREECE. I own, that if PLUTARCH had this fact in his eye, he is here guilty of a very gross paralogism, and assigns causes no way proportioned to the effects. But is it so great a prodigy, that an author should fall into a mistake of this nature ‖?

But

§ *De mercede conductis.*

‖ I must confess that that discourse of PLUTARCH, concerning the silence of the oracles, is in general of so odd a texture, and so unlike his other productions, that one is at a loss what judgment to form of it. 'Tis wrote in dialogue, which is a method of composition that PLUTARCH commonly little affects. The personages he introduces advance very wild, absurd, and contradictory opinions, more like the visionary systems or ravings of PLATO than

But whatever force may remain in this paſſage of PLUTARCH, we ſhall endeavour to counterbalance it by as remarkable a paſſage in DIODORUS SICULUS, where the hiſtorian, after mentioning NINUS's army of 1,700,000 foot and 200,000 horſe, endeavours to ſupport the credibility of this account by ſome poſterior facts; and adds, that we muſt not form a notion of the antient populouſneſs of mankind from the preſent emptineſs and depopulation which is ſpread over the world †. Thus an author, who lived at that very period of antiquity which is repreſented as moſt populous ‡, complains of the deſolation which then prevailed, gives the preference to former times, and has recourſe to antient fables as a foundation for his opinion. The humour of blaming the preſent, and admiring the paſt, is ſtrongly rooted in human nature, and has an influence even on perſons endued with the profoundeſt judgment and moſt extenſive learning.

than the ſolid ſenſe of PLUTARCH. There runs alſo thro' the whole an air of ſuperſtition and credulity, which reſembles very little the ſpirit that appears in other philoſophical compoſitions of that author. For 'tis remarkable, that tho' PLUTARCH be an hiſtorian as ſuperſtitious as HERODOTUS or LIVY, yet there is ſcarcely, in all antiquity, a philoſopher leſs ſuperſtitious, excepting CICERO and LUCIAN. I muſt therefore confeſs, that a paſſage of PLUTARCH, cited from this diſcourſe, has much leſs authority with me, than if it had been found in moſt of his other compoſitions.

There is only one other diſcourſe of PLUTARCH liable to like objections, *viz.* that *concerning thoſe whoſe puniſhment is delayed by the Deity*. It is alſo wrote in dialogue, contains like ſuperſtitious, wild viſions, and ſeems to have been chiefly compoſed in rivalſhip to PLATO, particularly his laſt book *de republica*.

And here I cannot but obſerve, that Monſ. FONTENELLE, a writer eminent for candor, ſeems to have departed a little from his uſual character, when he endeavours to throw a ridicule upon PLUTARCH on account of paſſages to be met with in this dialogue concerning oracles. The abſurdities here put into the mouths of the ſeveral perſonages are not to be aſcribed to PLUTARCH. He makes them refute each other; and, in general, he ſeems to intend the ridiculing of thoſe very opinions, which FONTENELLE would ridicule him for maintaining. See *Hiſtoire des oracles*.

† Lib. 2.

‡ He was cotemporary with CÆSAR and AUGUSTUS.

ESSAY

ESSAY XII.

Of the ORIGINAL CONTRACT.

AS no party, in the preſent age, can ſupport itſelf, without a philoſophical or ſpeculative ſyſtem of principles, annexed to its political or practical one; we accordingly find, that each of the parties, into which this nation is divided, has reared up a fabric of the former kind, in order to protect and cover that ſcheme of actions, which it purſues. The people being commonly very rude builders, eſpecially in this ſpeculative way, and more eſpecially ſtill, when actuated by party-zeal; 'tis natural to imagine, that their workmanſhip muſt be a little unſhapely, and diſcover evident marks of that violence and hurry, in which it was raiſed. The one party, by tracing up the origin of government to the DEITY, endeavour to render government ſo ſacred and inviolate, that it muſt be little leſs than ſacrilege, however diſorderly it may become, to touch or invade it, in the ſmalleſt article. The other party, by founding government altogether on the conſent of the PEOPLE, ſuppoſe that there is a kind of *original contract*, by which the ſubjects have reſerved the power of reſiſting their ſovereign, whenever they find themſelves aggrieved by that authority, with which they have, for certain purpoſes, voluntarily entruſted him. Theſe are the ſpeculative principles of the two parties; and theſe too are the practical conſequences deduced from them.

I ſhall

I shall venture to affirm, *That both these systems of speculative principles are just; tho' not in the sense intended by the parties: And That both the schemes of practical consequences are prudent; tho' not in the extremes, to which each party, in opposition to the other, has commonly endeavoured to carry them.*

That the DEITY is the ultimate author of all government, will never be denied by any who admits a general providence, and allows, that all events in the universe are conducted by an uniform plan and directed to wise purposes. As 'tis impossible for human race to subsist, at least in any comfortable or secure state, without the protection of government; government must certainly have been intended by that beneficent Being, who means the good of all his creatures: And as it has universally, in fact, taken place, in all countries, and all ages; we may conclude, with still greater certainty, that it was intended by that omniscient Being, who can never be deceived by any event or operation. But since he gave rise to it not by any particular or miraculous interposition, but by his concealed and universal efficacy; a sovereign cannot, properly speaking, be called his vicegerent, in any other sense than every power or force, being derived from him, may be said to act by his commission. Whatever actually happens is comprehended in the general plan or intention of providence; nor has the greatest and most lawful prince any more reason, upon that account, to plead a peculiar sacredness or inviolable authority, than an inferior magistrate, or even an usurper, or even a robber and a pyrate. The same divine super-intendant, who, for wise purposes, invested an ELIZABETH or a HENRY‖ with authority, did also, for purposes, no doubt, equally wise, tho' unknown, bestow power on a BORGIA or an ANGRIA. The same causes, which gave rise to the so-

‖ HENRY the 4th of FRANCE.

vereign

foreign power in every ſtate, eſtabliſhed likewiſe every petty juriſdiction in it, and every limited authority. A conſtable therefore, no leſs than a king, acts by a divine commiſſion, and poſſeſſes an indefeaſible right.

When we conſider how nearly equal all men are in their bodily force, and even in their mental powers and faculties, till cultivated by education; we muſt neceſſarily allow, that nothing but their own conſent could, at firſt, aſſociate them together, and ſubject them to any authority. The people, if we trace government to its firſt origin in the woods and deſerts, are the ſource of all power and juriſdiction, and voluntarily, for the ſake of peace and order, abandoned their native liberty, and received laws from their equal and companion. The conditions, upon which they were willing to ſubmit, were either expreſt, or were ſo clear and obvious, that it might well be eſteemed ſuperfluous to expreſs them. If this, then, be meant by the *original contract*, it cannot be denied, that all government is, at firſt, founded on a contract, and that the moſt ancient rude combinations of mankind were formed entirely by that principle. In vain, are we ſent to the records to ſeek for this charter of our liberties. It was not wrote on parchment, nor yet on leaves or barks of trees. It preceded the uſe of writing and all the other civilized arts of life. But we trace it plainly in the nature of man, and in the equality, which we find in all the individuals of that ſpecies. The force, which now prevails, and which is founded on fleets and armies, is plainly political, and derived from authority, the effect of eſtabliſhed government. A man's natural force conſiſts only in the vigour of his limbs, and the ſtrength of his courage; which could never ſubject multitudes to the command of one. Nothing but their own conſent, and their ſenſe of the advantages of peace and order, could have had that influence.

But

But philosophers, who have embraced a party (if that be not a contradiction in terms) are not contented with these concessions. They assert, not only that government in its earliest infancy arose from consent, or the voluntary combination of the people; but also, that, even at present, when it has attained its full maturity, it rests on no other foundation. They affirm, that all men are still born equal, and owe allegiance to no prince or government, unless bound by the obligation and sanction of a *promise*. And as no man, without some equivalent, would forego the advantages of his native liberty, and subject himself to the will of another; this promise is always understood to be conditional, and imposes on him no obligation, unless he meets with justice and protection from his sovereign. These advantages the sovereign promises him in return; and if he fails in the execution, he has broke, on his part, the articles of engagement, and has thereby freed his subjects from all obligations to allegiance. Such, according to these philosophers, is the foundation of authority in every government; and such the right of resistance, possest by every subject.

But would these reasoners look abroad into the world, they would meet with nothing that, in the least, corresponds to their ideas, or can warrant so refined and philosophical a system. On the contrary, we find, every where, princes, who claim their subjects as their property, and assert their independent right of sovereignty, from conquest or succession. We find also, every where, subjects, who acknowledge this right in their princes, and suppose themselves born under obligations of obedience to a certain sovereign, as much as under the ties of reverence and duty to certain parents. These connexions are always conceived to be equally independent of our consent, in PERSIA and CHINA; in FRANCE and SPAIN; and even in HOLLAND and ENGLAND, wherever the doctrines

doctrines abovementioned have not been carefully inculcated. Obedience or ſubjection becomes ſo familiar, that moſt men never make any enquiry about its origin or cauſe, more than about the principle of gravity, reſiſtance, or the moſt univerſal laws of nature. Or if curioſity ever move them; ſo ſoon as they learn, that they themſelves and their anceſtors have, for ſeveral ages, or from time immemorial, been ſubject to ſuch a government or ſuch a family; they immediately acquieſce, and acknowledge their obligation to allegiance. Were you to preach, in moſt parts of the world, that political connexions are founded altogether on voluntary conſent or a mutual promiſe, the magiſtrate would ſoon impriſon you, as ſeditious, for looſening the ties of obedience; if your friends did not before ſhut you up, as delirious, for advancing ſuch abſurdities. 'Tis ſtrange, that an act of the mind, which every individual is ſuppoſed to have formed, and after he came to the uſe of reaſon too, otherwiſe it could have no authority; that this act, I ſay, ſhould be ſo unknown to all of them, that over the face of the whole earth there ſcarce remain any traces or memory of it.

But the contract, on which government is founded, is ſaid to be the *original contract*; and conſequently may be ſuppoſed too old to fall under the knowledge of the preſent generation. If the agreement, by which ſavage men firſt aſſociated and conjoined their force, be here meant, this is acknowledged to be real; but being ſo antient, and being obliterated by a thouſand changes of government and princes, it cannot now be ſuppoſed to retain any authority. If we would ſay any thing to the purpoſe, we muſt aſſert, that every particular government, which is lawful, and which impoſes any duty of allegiance on the ſubject, was, at firſt, founded on conſent and a voluntary compact. But beſides that this ſuppoſes the conſent of the fathers to bind the children, even to the

moſt

most remote generations (which republican writers will never allow) besides this, I say, it is not justified by history or experience, in any age or country of the world.

Almost all the governments, which exist at present, or of which there remains any record in story, have been founded originally, either on usurpation or conquest, or both, without any pretence of a fair consent, or voluntary subjection of the people. When an artful and bold man is placed at the head of an army or faction, 'tis often easy for him, by employing sometimes violence, sometimes false pretences, to establish his dominion over a people a hundred times more numerous than his partizans. He allows no such open communication, that his enemies can know, with certainty, their number or force. He gives them no leisure to assemble together in a body, to oppose him. Even all those, who are the instruments of his usurpation, may wish his fall; but their ignorance of each other's intention keeps them in awe, and is the sole cause of his security. By such arts as these, many governments have been established; and this is all the *original contract*, which they have to boast of.

The face of the earth is continually changing, by the encrease of small kingdoms into great empires, by the dissolution of great empires into smaller kingdoms, by the planting of colonies, by the migration of tribes. Is there any thing discoverable in all these events, but force and violence? Where is the mutual agreement or voluntary association so much talked of?

Even the smoothest way, by which a nation may receive a foreign master, by marriage or a will, is not extremely honourable for the people; but supposes them to be disposed of, like a dowry or a legacy, according to the pleasure or interest of their rulers.

But where no force interposes, and election takes place; what is this election so highly vaunted? 'Tis either the com-

combination of a few great men, who decide for the whole, and will allow of no oppoſition: Or 'tis the fury of a rabble, that follow a ſeditious ringleader, who is not known, perhaps, to a dozen among them, and who owes his advancement merely to his own impudence, or to the momentary caprice of his fellows.

Are theſe diſorderly elections, which are rare too, of ſuch mighty authority, as to be the only lawful foundation of all government and allegiance?

In reality, there is not a more terrible event, than a total diſſolution of government, which gives liberty to the multitude, and makes the determination or choice of a new eſtabliſhment depend upon a number which nearly approaches the body of the people: For it never comes entirely to the whole body of them. Every wiſe man, then, wiſhes to ſee, at the head of a powerful and obedient army, a general, who may ſpeedily ſeize the prize, and give to the people a maſter, which they are ſo unfit to chooſe for themſelves. So little correſpondent is fact and reality to thoſe philoſophical notions.

Let not the eſtabliſhment at the *revolution*, deceive us, or make us ſo much in love with a philoſophical origin to government, as to imagine all others monſtrous and irregular. Even that event was far from correſponding to theſe refined ideas. It was only the ſucceſſion, and that only in the regal part of the government, which was then changed: And it was only the majority of ſeven hundred, who determined that change for near ten millions. I doubt not, indeed, but the bulk, of theſe ten millions acquieſced willingly in the determination: But was the matter left, in the leaſt, to their choice? Was it not juſtly ſuppoſed to be, from that moment, decided, and every man puniſhed, who refuſed to ſubmit to the new ſovercign? How otherways could the matter have ever been brought to any iſſue or concluſion?

The republic of ATHENS was, I believe, the moſt extenſive democracy, which we read of in hiſtory: Yet if we make the requiſite allowances for the women, the ſlaves, and the ſtrangers, we ſhall find, that that eſtabliſhment was not, at firſt, made, nor any law ever voted, by a tenth part of thoſe who were bound to pay obedience to it. Not to mention the iſlands and foreign dominions, which the ATHENIANS claimed as theirs by right of conqueſt. And as 'tis well known, that popular aſſemblies in that city were always full of licence and diſorder, notwithſtanding the forms and laws by which they were checked; How much more diſorderly muſt they be, where they form not the eſtabliſhed conſtitution, but aſſemble tumultuouſly on the diſſolution of the antient government, in order to give riſe to a new one? How chimerical muſt it be to talk of a choice in any ſuch circumſtances?

The ACHÆANS enjoyed the freeſt and moſt perfect democracy of all antiquity; yet they employed force to oblige ſome cities to enter into their league, as we learn from POLYBIUS ‡.

HARRY the IVth and HARRY the VIIth of ENGLAND, had really no other title to the throne but a parliamentary election; yet they never would acknowledge it, for fear of weakening their authority. Strange! if the only real foundation of all authority be conſent and promiſe.

'Tis in vain to ſay, that all governments are, or ſhould be, at firſt, founded on popular conſent, as much as the neceſſity of human affairs will admit. This favours entirely my pretenſion. I maintain, that human affairs never will admit of this conſent; ſeldom of the appearance of it. But that conqueſt or uſurpation, that is, in plain terms, force, by diſſolving the antient governments, is the origin of almoſt all the new ones, which ever were

‡ Lib. 2. cap. 38.

eſtabliſhed

eſtabliſhed in the world. And that in the few caſes, where conſent may ſeem to have taken place, it was commonly ſo irregular, ſo confined, or ſo much intermixed either with fraud or violence, that it cannot have any great authority.

My intention here is not to exclude the conſent of the people from being one juſt foundation of government where it has place. It is ſurely the beſt and moſt ſacred of any. I only pretend, that it has very ſeldom had place in any degree, and never almoſt in its full extent. And that therefore ſome other foundation of government muſt alſo be admitted.

Were all men poſſeſt of ſo inflexible a regard to juſtice, that, of themſelves, they would totally abſtain from the properties of others; they had for ever remained in a ſtate of abſolute liberty, without ſubjection to any magiſtrates or political ſociety: But this is a ſtate of perfection, of which human nature is juſtly eſteemed incapable. Again; were all men poſſeſt of ſo perfect an underſtanding, as always to know their own intereſt, no form of government had ever been ſubmitted to, but what was eſtabliſhed on conſent, and was fully canvaſt by each member of the ſociety: But this ſtate of perfection is likewiſe much ſuperior to human nature. Reaſon, hiſtory and experience ſhew us, that all political ſocieties have had an origin much leſs accurate and regular; and were one to chooſe a period of time, when the people's conſent was leaſt regarded in public tranſactions, it would be preciſely on the eſtabliſhment of a new government. In a ſettled conſtitution, their inclinations are often ſtudied; but during the fury of revolutions, conqueſts, and public convulſions, military force or political craft uſually decides the controverſy.

When a new government is eſtabliſhed, by whatever means, the people are commonly diſſatisfied with it, and

pay obedience more from fear and neceſſity, than from any idea of allegiance or of moral obligation. The prince is watchful and jealous, and muſt carefully guard againſt every beginning or appearance of inſurrection. Time, by degrees, removes all theſe difficulties, and accuſtoms the nation to regard, as their lawful or native princes, that family, whom, at firſt, they conſidered as uſurpers or foreign conquerors. In order to found this opinion, they have no recourſe to any notion of voluntary conſent or promiſe, which, they know, never was, in this caſe, either expected or demanded. The original eſtabliſhment was formed by violence, and ſubmitted to from neceſſity. The ſubſequent adminiſtration is alſo ſupported by power, and acquieſced in by the people, not as a matter of choice, but of obligation. They imagine not, that their conſent gives their prince a title: But they willingly conſent, becauſe they think, that, from long poſſeſſion, he has acquired a title independent of their choice or inclination.

Should it be ſaid, that by living under the dominion of a prince, which one might leave, every individual has given a *tacit* conſent to his authority, and promiſed him obedience; it may be anſwered, That ſuch implied conſent can only take place, where a man imagines, that the matter depends on his choice. But where he thinks (as all mankind do who are born under eſtabliſhed governments) that by his birth he owes allegiance to a certain prince or certain government; it would be abſurd to infer a conſent or choice, which he expreſly, in this caſe, renounces and abjures.

Can we ſeriouſly ſay, that a poor peaſant or artizan has a free choice to leave his own country, when he knows no foreign language or manners, and lives from day to day, by the ſmall wages which he acquires? We may as well aſſert, that a man, by remaining in a veſſel, freely conſents to the dominion of the maſter; tho' he was car-

ried

ried on board while asleep, and must leap into the ocean, and perish, the moment he leaves her.

What if the prince forbid his subjects to quit his dominions; as in TIBERIUS's time, it was regarded as a crime in a ROMAN knight that he had attempted to fly to the PARTHIANS, in order to escape the tyranny of that emperor‡? Or as the antient MUSCOVITES prohibited all travelling under pain of death? And did a prince observe, that many of his subjects were seized with the frenzy of transporting themselves to foreign nations, he would doubtless, with great reason and justice, restrain them, in order to prevent the depopulation of his own country. Would he forfeit the allegiance of all his subjects, by so wise and reasonable a law? Yet the freedom of their choice is surely, in that case, ravished from them.

A company of men, who should leave their native country, in order to people some uninhabited region, might dream of recovering their native freedom; but they would soon find, that their prince still laid claim to them, and called them his subjects, even in their new settlement. And in this he would but act conformably to the common ideas of mankind.

The truest *tacit* consent of this kind, which is ever observed, is when a foreigner settles in any country, and is beforehand acquainted with the prince, and government, and laws, to which he must submit: Yet is his allegiance, tho' more voluntary, much less expected or depended on, than that of a natural born subject. On the contrary, his native prince still asserts a claim to him. And if he punishes not the renegade, when he seizes him in war with his new prince's commission; this clemency is not founded on the municipal law, which in all countries condemns the prisoner; but on the consent of princes,

‡ TACIT. Ann. 6. cap. 14.

who have agreed to this indulgence, in order to prevent reprisals.

Suppose an usurper, after having banished his lawful prince and royal family, should establish his dominion for ten or a dozen years in any country, and should preserve such exact discipline in his troops, and so regular a disposition in his garrisons, that no insurrection had ever been raised, or even murmur heard, against his administration: Can it be asserted, that the people, who in their hearts abhor his treason, have tacitly consented to his authority, and promised him allegiance, merely because, from necessity, they live under his dominion? Suppose again their natural prince restored, by means of an army, which he assembles in foreign countries: They receive him with joy and exultation, and shew plainly with what reluctance they had submitted to any other yoke. I may now ask, upon what foundation the prince's title stands? Not on popular consent surely: For tho' the people willingly acquiesce in his authority, they never imagine, that their consent makes him sovereign. They consent; because they apprehend him to be already, by birth, their lawful sovereign. And as to that tacit consent, which may now be inferred from their living under his dominion, this is no more than what they formerly gave to the tyrant and usurper.

When we assert, that all lawful government arises from the people, we certainly do them a great deal more honour than they deserve, or even expect and desire, from us. After the ROMAN dominions became too unwieldy for the republic to govern, the people, over the whole known world, were extremely grateful to AUGUSTUS for that authority, which, by violence, he had established over them; and they shewed an equal disposition to submit to the successor, whom he left them, by his last will and testament. It was afterwards their misfortune, that there never

never was, in one family, any long regular ſucceſſion; but that their line of princes was continually broke, either by private aſſaſſinations or publick rebellions. The *prætorian* bands, on the failure of every family, ſet up one emperor; the legions in the Eaſt a ſecond; thoſe in GERMANY, perhaps, a third: And the ſword alone could decide the controverſy. The condition of the people, in that mighty monarchy, was to be lamented, not becauſe the choice of the emperor was never left to them; for that was impracticable: But becauſe they never fell under any ſucceſſion of maſters, who might regularly follow each other. As to the violence and wars and bloodſhed, occaſioned by every new ſettlement; thoſe were not blameable, becauſe they were inevitable.

The houſe of LANCASTER ruled in this iſland about ſixty years; yet the partizans of the white roſe ſeemed daily to multiply in ENGLAND. The preſent eſtabliſhment has taken place during a ſtill longer period. Have all views of right in another family been utterly extinguiſhed; even tho' ſcarce any man now alive had arrived at years of diſcretion, when it was expelled, or could have conſented to its dominion, or have promiſed it allegiance? A ſufficient indication ſurely of the general ſentiment of mankind on this head. For we blame not the partizans of the abdicated family, merely on account of the long time, during which they have preſerved their imaginary fidelity. We blame them for adhering to a family, which, we affirm, has been juſtly expelled, and which, from the moment the new ſettlement took place, had forfeited all title to authority.

But would we have a more regular, at leaſt, a more philoſophical refutation of this principle of an original contract or popular conſent; perhaps, the following obſervations may ſuffice.

All *moral* duties may be divided into two kinds. The *first* are those, to which men are impelled by some natural instinct or immediate propensity, which operates in them independent of all ideas of obligation, and of all views either to public or private utility. Of this nature are love of children, gratitude to benefactors, pity to the unfortunate. When we reflect on the advantage, which results to society from such humane instincts, we pay them the just tribute of moral approbation and esteem: But the person, actuated by them, feels their power and influence, antecedent to any such reflection.

The *second* kind of moral duties are such as are not supported by any original instinct of nature, but are performed entirely from a sense of obligation, when we consider the necessities of human society, and the impossibility of supporting it, if these duties were neglected. 'Tis thus *justice* or a regard to the property of others, *fidelity*, or the observance of promises, become obligatory, and acquire an authority over mankind. For as 'tis evident, that every man loves himself better than any other person, he is naturally impelled to extend his acquisitions as much as possible; and nothing can restrain him in this propensity, but reflection and experience, by which he learns the pernicious effects of that licence, and the total dissolution of society, which must ensue from it. His original inclination, therefore, or instinct, is here checked and restrained by a subsequent judgment or observation.

The case is precisely the same with the political or civil duty of *allegiance*, as with the natural duties of justice and fidelity. Our primary instincts lead us, either to indulge ourselves in unlimited liberty, or to seek dominion over others: And 'tis reflection only, which engages us to sacrifice such strong passions to the interests of peace and order. A very small degree of experience and observation suffices to teach us, that society cannot possibly be maintained

maintained without the authority of magiſtrates, and that this authority muſt ſoon fall into contempt, where exact obedience is not payed to it. The obſervation of theſe general and obvious intereſts is the ſource of all allegiance, and of that moral obligation, which we attribute to it.

What neceſſity, therefore, is there to found the duty of *allegiance* or obedience to magiſtrates on that of *fidelity* or a regard to promiſes, and to ſuppoſe, that 'tis the conſent of each individual, which ſubjects him to government; when it appears, that both allegiance and fidelity ſtand preciſely on the ſame foundation, and are both ſubmitted to by mankind, on account of the apparent intereſts and neceſſities of human ſociety? We are bound to obey our ſovereign, 'tis ſaid; becauſe we have given a tacit promiſe to that purpoſe. But why are we bound to obſerve our promiſe? It muſt here be aſſerted, that the commerce and intercourſe of mankind, which are of ſuch mighty advantage, can have no ſecurity where men pay no regard to their engagements. In like manner, may it be ſaid, that men could not live at all in ſociety, at leaſt in a civilized ſociety, without laws and magiſtrates and judges, to prevent the encroachments of the ſtrong upon the weak, of the violent upon the juſt and equitable. The obligation to allegiance being of like force and authority with the obligation to fidelity, we gain nothing by reſolving the one into the other. The general intereſts or neceſſities of ſociety are ſufficient to eſtabliſh both.

If the reaſon is aſked of that obedience, which we are bound to pay to government, I readily anſwer: *becauſe ſociety could not otherwiſe ſubſiſt*: And this anſwer is clear and intelligible to all mankind. Your anſwer is, *becauſe we ſhould keep our word*. But beſides, that no body, till trained in a philoſophical ſyſtem, can either comprehend or reliſh this anſwer: Beſides this, I ſay, you find yourſelf embarraſſed, when 'tis aſked, *why we are bound to keep our word?*

word? And you can give no other answer, but what would, immediately, without any circuit, have accounted for our obligation to allegiance.

But *to whom is allegiance due? And who are our lawful sovereigns?* This question is often the most difficult of any, and liable to infinite discussions. When people are so happy, that they can answer, *Our present sovereign, who inherits, in a direct line, from ancestors, that have governed us for many ages*; this answer admits of no reply, even tho' historians, in tracing up to the remotest antiquity the origin of that royal family, may find, as commonly happens, that its first authority was derived from usurpation and violence. 'Tis confest, that private justice or the abstinence from the properties of others, is a most cardinal virtue: Yet reason tells, that there is no property in durable objects, such as lands or houses, when carefully examined in passing from hand to hand, but must, in some period, have been founded on fraud and injustice. The necessities of human society, neither in private nor public life, will allow of such an accurate enquiry: And there is no virtue or moral duty, but what may, with facility, be refined away, if we indulge a false philosophy, in sifting and scrutinizing it, by every captious rule of logic, in every light or position, in which it may be placed.

The questions with regard to private property have filled infinite volumes of law and philosophy, if in both we add the commentators to the original text; and in the end, we may safely pronounce, that many of the rules, there established, are uncertain, ambiguous, and arbitrary. The like opinion may be formed with regard to the successions and rights of princes and forms of government. Many cases, no doubt, occur, especially in the infancy of any government, which admit of no determination from the laws of justice and equity: And our historian RAPIN allows, that the controversy between EDWARD the third and

and PHILIP the VALOIS was of this nature, and could be decided only by an appeal to heaven, that is, by war and violence.

Who shall tell me, whether GERMANICUS or DRUSUS ought to have succeeded TIBERIUS, had he died, while they were both alive, without naming any of them for his successor? Ought the right of adoption to be received as equivalent to that of blood, in a nation, where it had the same effect in private families, and had already, in two instances, taken place in the public? Ought GERMANICUS to be esteemed the eldest son because he was born before DRUSUS; or the younger, because he was adopted after the birth of his brother? Ought the right of the elder to be regarded in a nation, where the eldest brother had no advantage in the succession of private families? Ought the ROMAN empire, at that time to be esteemed hereditary, because of two examples; or ought it, even so early, to be regarded as belonging to the stronger or present possessor, as being founded on so recent an usurpation?

COMMODUS mounted the throne after a pretty long succession of excellent emperors, who had acquired their title, not by birth, or public election, but by the fictitious rite of adoption. That bloody debauchee being murdered by a conspiracy suddenly formed between his wench and her gallant, who happened at that time to be *Prætorian Præfect*, or to have the command of the guards; these immediately deliberated about chooſing a master to human kind, to speak in the style of those ages; and cast their eyes on PERTINAX. Before the tyrant's death was known, the *Præfect* went secretly to that senator, who, on the appearance of the soldiers, imagined that his execution had been ordered by COMMODUS. He was immediately saluted emperor by the officer and his attendants; chearfully proclaimed by the populace; unwillingly

willingly submitted to by the guards; formally recognized by the senate; and passively received by the provinces and armies of the empire.

The discontent of the *Prætorian* bands soon broke out in a sudden sedition, which occasioned the murder of that excellent prince: And the world being now without a master and without government, the guards thought proper to set the empire formally to sale. JULIAN, the purchaser, was proclaimed by the soldiers, recognized by the senate, and submitted to by the people, and must also have been submitted to by the provinces, had not the envy of the legions begot opposition and resistance. PESCENNIUS NIGER in SYRIA elected himself emperor, gained the tumultuary consent of his army, and was attended with the secret good-will of the senate and people of ROME. ALBINUS in BRITAIN found an equal right to set up his claim; but SEVERUS, who governed PANNONIA, prevailed in the end above both of them. That able politician and warrior, finding his own birth and dignity too much inferior to the imperial crown, profest at first an intention only of revenging the death of PERTINAX. He marched as general into ITALY, defeated JULIAN; and without our being able to fix any precise commencement even of the soldiers consent, he was from necessity acknowledged emperor by the senate and people; and fully established in his violent authority by subduing NIGER and ALBINUS *.

Inter hæc Gordianus CÆSAR (says CAPITOLINUS, speaking of another period) *sublatus a militibus, Imperator est appellatus, quia non erat alius in præsenti.* 'Tis to be remarked that GORDIAN was a boy of fourteen years of age.

Frequent instances of a like nature occur in the history of the emperors; in that of ALEXANDER's succession;

* HERODIAN, lib. 2.

and

and of many other countries: Nor can any thing be more unhappy than a despotic government of that kind; where the succession is disjointed and irregular, and must be determined, on every occasion, by force or election. In a free government, the matter is often unavoidable, and is also much less dangerous. The interests of liberty may there frequently lead the people, in their own defence, to alter the succession of the crown. And the constitution, being compounded of parts, may still maintain a sufficient stability, by resting on the aristocratical or democratical members, tho' the monarchical be altered, from time to time, in order to accommodate it to the former.

In an absolute government, when there is no legal prince, who has a title to the throne, it may safely be determined to belong to the first occupier. Instances of this kind are but too frequent, especially in the eastern monarchies. When any race of princes expires, the will or destination of the last sovereign will be regarded as a title. Thus the edict of LEWIS the XIVth, who called the bastard prince to the succession in case of the failure of all the legitimate princes, would, in such an event, have some authority *. Thus the will of CHARLES the second

* It is remarkable that in the remonstrance of the duke of BOURBON and the legitimate princes, against this destination of LOUIS the XIVth, the doctrine of the *original contract* is insisted on, even in that absolute government. The FRENCH nation, say they, choosing HUGH CAPET and his posterity to rule over them and their posterity, where the former line fails, there do resume their power to choose a new royal family; and this right is invaded by calling the bastard princes to the throne, without the consent of the nation. But the Comte de BOULAINVILLIERS, who wrote in defence of the bastard princes, ridicules this notion of an original contract, especially when applied to HUGH CAPET; who mounted the throne, says he, by the same arts, which have ever been employed by all conquerors and usurpers. He got his title, indeed, recognized by the states after he had put himself in possession: But is this a choice or contract? The Comte de BOULAINVILLIERS, we

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cond disposed of the whole SPANISH monarchy. The cession of the antient proprietor, especially when joined to conquest, is likewise esteemed a very good title. The general bond or obligation, which binds us to government, is the interest and necessities of society; and this obligation is very strong. The determination of it to this or that particular prince or form of government is frequently more uncertain and dubious. Present possession has considerable authority in these cases, and greater than in private property; because of the disorders which attend all revolutions and changes of government *.

We shall only observe, before we conclude, that tho' an appeal to general opinion may justly, in the speculative sciences of metaphysics, natural philosophy, or astronomy, be esteemed unfair and inconclusive, yet in all questions with regard to morals, as well as criticism, there is really no other standard, by which any controversy can ever be decided. And nothing is a clearer proof that a theory of this kind is erroneous, than to find, that it leads to paradoxes, which are repugnant to the common sentiments of mankind, and to the practice and opinion of all nations and all ages. The doctrine, which founds all lawful government on an *original contract*, or consent of the people, is plainly of this kind; nor has the ablest of its partizans, in prosecution of it, scrupled to affirm, *that absolute monarchy is inconsistent with civil society, and so can be no form of civil government at all* †; *and*

may observe, was a noted republican; but being a man of learning, and very conversant in history, he knew the people were never almost consulted in these revolutions and new establishments, and that time alone bestowed right and authority on what was commonly at first founded on force and violence. See *Etat de la* FRANCE, Vol. III.

* The crime of rebellion, amongst the antients was commonly marked by the terms νεωτερίζειν, *novas res moliri*.

† See LOCKE on government, chap. 7. § 90.

that

that the ſupreme power in a ſtate cannot take from any man, by taxes and impoſitions, any part of his property, without his own conſent or that of his repreſentatives †. What authority any moral reaſoning can have, which leads into opinions ſo wide of the general practice of mankind, in every place but this ſingle kingdom, 'tis eaſy to determine ‖.

† Id. chap. 11. § 138, 139, 140.

‖ The only paſſage I meet with in antiquity, where the obligation of obedience to government is aſcribed to a promiſe is in PLATO *in Critone*; where SOCRATES refuſes to eſcape from priſon, becauſe he had tacitly promiſed to obey the laws. Thus he builds a *tory* conſequence of paſſive obedience, on a *whig* foundation of the original contract.

New diſcoveries are not to be expected in theſe matters. If no man, till very lately, ever imagined that government was founded on contract, 'tis certain it cannot, in general, have any ſuch foundation.

ESSAY

ESSAY XIII.

Of Passive Obedience.

IN the former eſſay, we endeavoured to refute the *ſpeculative* ſyſtems of politics advanced in this nation; as well the religious ſyſtem of the one party, as the philoſophical of the other. We come now to examine the *practical* conſequences, deduced by each party, with regard to the meaſures of ſubmiſſion due to ſovereigns.

As the obligation to juſtice is founded intirely on the intereſts of ſociety, which require mutual abſtinence from property, in order to preſerve peace among mankind; 'tis evident, that, when the execution of juſtice would be attended with very pernicious conſequences, that virtue muſt be ſuſpended, and give place to public utility, in ſuch extraordinary and ſuch preſſing emergencies. The maxim, *fiat Juſtitia & ruat Cœlum*, let juſtice be performed, tho' the univerſe be deſtroyed, is apparently falſe, and by ſacrificing the end to the means, ſhews a prepoſterous idea of the ſubordination of duties. What governor of a town makes any ſcruple of burning the ſuburbs, when they facilitate the advances of the enemy? Or what general abſtains from plundering a neutral country, when the neceſſities of war require it, and he cannot otherwiſe maintain his army? The caſe is the ſame with the duty of allegiance; and common ſenſe teaches us, that as government binds us to obedience only on account of its tendency to public utility, that duty muſt always, in extraordinary caſes, when public ruin would evidently attend obedience, yield to

the primary and original obligation. *Salus populi ſuprema Lex*, the ſafety of the people is the ſupreme law. This maxim is agreeable to the ſentiments of mankind in all ages: Nor is any one, when he reads of the inſurrections againſt a NERO, or a PHILIP, ſo infatuated with party-ſyſtems, as not to wiſh ſucceſs to the enterprize, and praiſe the undertakers. Even our high monarchical party, in ſpite of their ſublime theory, are forced, in ſuch caſes, to judge, and feel, and approve, in conformity to the reſt of mankind.

Reſiſtance, therefore, being admitted in extraordinary emergencies, the queſtion can only be, among good reaſoners, with regard to the degree of neceſſity, which can juſtify reſiſtance, and render it lawful or commendable. And here I muſt confeſs, that I ſhall always incline to *their* ſide, who draw the bond of allegiance the cloſeſt poſſible, and conſider an infringement of it, as the laſt refuge in deſperate caſes, when the public is in the higheſt danger, from violence and tyranny. For beſides the miſchiefs of a civil war, which commonly attends inſurrection; 'tis certain, that where a diſpoſition to rebellion appears among any people, it is one chief cauſe of tyranny in the rulers, and forces them into many violent meaſures, which they never would have embraced, had every one ſeemed inclined to ſubmiſſion and obedience. 'Tis thus the *tyrannicide* or aſſaſſination, approved of by ancient maxims, inſtead of keeping tyrants and uſurpers in awe, made them ten times more fierce and unrelenting; and is now juſtly, upon that account, aboliſhed by the laws of nations, and univerſally condemned as a baſe and treacherous method of bringing to juſtice theſe diſturbers of ſociety.

Beſides; we muſt conſider, that as obedience is our duty in the common courſe of things, it ought chiefly to be inculcated; nor can any thing be more prepoſte-

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rous than an anxious care and ſollicitude in ſtating all the caſes, in which reſiſtance may be allowed. Thus, tho' a philoſopher reaſonably acknowledges, in the courſe of an argument, that the rules of juſtice may be diſpenſed with in caſes of urgent neceſſity; what ſhould we think of a preacher or caſuiſt, who ſhould make it his chief ſtudy to find out ſuch caſes, and enforce them with all the vehemence of argument and eloquence? Would he not be better employed in inculcating the general doctrine, than in diſplaying the particular exceptions, which we are, perhaps, but too much inclined, of ourſelves, to embrace, and to extend?

There are, however, two reaſons, which may be pleaded in defence of that party among us, who have, with ſo much induſtry, propagated the maxims of reſiſtance; maxims, which, it muſt be confeſt, are, in general, ſo pernicious, and ſo deſtructive of civil ſociety. The *firſt* is, that their antagoniſts carrying the doctrine of obedience to ſuch an extravagant height, as not only never to mention the exceptions in extraordinary caſes (which might, perhaps, be excuſable) but even poſitively to exclude them; it became neceſſary to inſiſt on theſe exceptions, and defend the rights of injured truth and liberty. The *ſecond*, and, perhaps, better reaſon, is founded on the nature of the British conſtitution and form of government.

'Tis almoſt peculiar to our conſtitution to eſtabliſh a firſt magiſtrate with ſuch high pre eminence and dignity, that tho' limited by the laws, he is, in a manner, ſo far as regards his own perſon, above the laws, and can neither be queſtioned nor puniſhed for any injury or wrong, which may be committed by him. His miniſters alone, or thoſe who act by his commiſſion, are obnoxious to juſtice; and while the prince is thus allured, by the proſpect of perſonal ſafety, to give the laws their free courſe, an equal ſecurity is, in effect, obtained, by the

puniſhment of leſſer offenders, and at the ſame time a civil war is avoided, which would be the infallible conſequence, were an attack, at every turn, made directly upon the ſovereign. But tho' the conſtitution pays this ſalutary compliment to the prince, it can never reaſonably be underſtood, by that maxim, to have determined its own deſtruction, or to have eſtabliſhed a tame ſubmiſſion, where he protects his miniſters, perſeveres in injuſtice, and uſurps the whole power of the commonwealth. This caſe, indeed, is never expreſſly put by the laws; becauſe it is impoſſible for them, in their ordinary courſe, to provide a remedy for it, or eſtabliſh any magiſtrate, with ſuperior authority, to chaſtiſe the exorbitancies of the prince. But as a right without a remedy would be the greateſt of all abſurdities; the remedy in this caſe, is the extraordinary one of reſiſtance, when affairs come to that extremity, that the conſtitution can be defended by it alone. Reſiſtance, therefore, muſt, of courſe, become more frequent in the BRITISH government, than in others, which are ſimpler, and conſiſt of fewer parts and movements. Where the king is an abſolute ſovereign, he has little temptation to commit ſuch enormous tyranny as may juſtly provoke rebellion: But where he is limited, his imprudent ambition, without any great vices, may run him into that perilous ſituation. This is commonly ſuppoſed to have been the caſe with CHARLES the Firſt; and if we may now ſpeak truth, after animoſities are laid, this was alſo the caſe with JAMES the Second. Theſe were harmleſs, if not, in their private character, good men; but miſtaking the nature of our conſtitution, and engroſſing the whole legiſlative power, it became neceſſary to oppoſe them with ſome vehemence; and even to deprive the latter formally of that authority, which he had uſed with ſuch imprudence and indiſcretion.

ESSAY

ESSAY XIV.

Of the COALITION of PARTIES.

TO aboliſh all diſtinctions of party may not be practicable, perhaps not deſirable, in a free government. The only parties, which are dangerous, are ſuch as entertain oppoſite views with regard to the eſſentials of government, the ſucceſſion of the crown, or the more conſiderable privileges belonging to the ſeveral members of the conſtitution; where there is no room for any compromize or accommodation, and where the controverſy may appear ſo momentous as to juſtify even an oppoſition by arms to the pretenſions of antagoniſts. Of this nature was the animoſity continued for above a century between the parties in ENGLAND; an animoſity which broke out ſometimes into civil war, which occaſioned violent revolutions, and which continually endangered the peace and tranquillity of the nation. But as there has appeared of late the ſtrongeſt ſymptoms of an univerſal deſire to aboliſh theſe party diſtinctions; this tendency to a coalition affords the moſt agreeable proſpect of future happineſs, and ought to be carefully cheriſhed and promoted by every lover of his country.

There is not a more effectual method of promoting ſo good an end, than to prevent all unreaſonable inſult and triumph of the one party over the other, to encourage moderate opinions, to find the proper medium in all diſ-

putes, to perſuade each that its antagoniſt may poſſibly be ſometimes in the right, and to keep a balance in the praiſe and blame which we beſtow on either ſide. The two former Eſſays, concerning the *original contract* and *paſſive obedience*, are calculated for this purpoſe with regard to the *philoſophical* controverſies between the parties, and tend to ſhow that neither ſide are in theſe reſpects ſo fully ſupported by reaſon as they endeavour to flatter themſelves. We ſhall proceed to exerciſe the ſame moderation with regard to the *hiſtorical* diſputes between the parties, by proving that each of them was juſtified by plauſible topics; that there were on both ſides wiſe men who meant well to their country, and that the paſt animoſity between the factions had no better foundation than narrow prejudice or intereſted paſſion.

The popular party, who afterwards acquired the name of whigs, might juſtify by very ſpecious arguments, that oppoſition to the crown, from which our preſent free conſtitution is derived. Tho' obliged to acknowlege, that precedents in favour of prerogative had uniformly taken place during many reigns before CHARLES the Firſt, they thought, that there was no reaſon for ſubmitting any longer to ſo dangerous an authority. Such might have been their reaſoning: The rights of mankind are ſo ſacred, that no preſcription of tyranny or arbitrary power can have authority ſufficient to aboliſh them. Liberty is ſo ineſtimable a bleſſing, that, wherever there appears any probability of recovering it, a nation may willingly run many hazards, and ought not even to repine at the greateſt effuſion of blood or diſſipation of treaſure. All human inſtitutions, and none more than government, are in continual fluctuation. Kings are ſure to embrace every opportunity of extending their prerogatives: And if favourable incidents be not alſo laid hold of to extend and ſecure the privileges of the people,

an univerſal deſpotiſm muſt for ever prevail amongſt mankind. The example of all the neighbouring nations prove, that it is no longer ſafe to entruſt with the crown the ſame exorbitant prerogatives which had formerly been exerciſed during rude aed ſimple ages. And tho' the example of many late reigns may be pleaded in favour of a power in the prince ſomewhat arbitrary, more remote reigns afford inſtances of ſtricter limitations impoſed on the crown; and thoſe pretenſions of the parliament, now branded with the title of innovations, are only a recovery of the juſt rights of the people.

Theſe views, far from being odious, are ſurely large, and generous, and noble: To their prevalence and ſucceſs the kingdom owes its liberty; perhaps its learning, its induſtry, commerce, and naval power: By them chiefly the ENGLISH name is diſtinguiſhed among the ſociety of nations, and aſpires to a rivalſhip with that of the freeſt and moſt illuſtrious commonwealths of antiquity. But as all theſe mighty conſequences could not reaſonably be foreſeen at the time when the conteſt began, the royaliſts of that age wanted not ſpecious arguments on their ſide, by which they could juſtify their defence of the then eſtabliſhed prerogatives of the crown. We ſhall ſtate the queſtion, as it might appear to them at the aſſembling of that parliament, which by their violent encroachments on the crown, began the civil wars.

The only rule of government, they might have ſaid, known and acknowledged among men, is uſe and practice: Reaſon is ſo uncertain a guide that it will always be expoſed to doubt and controverſy: Could it ever render itſelf prevalent over the people, men had always retained it as their ſole rule of conduct: They had ſtill continued in the primitive, unconnected ſtate of nature, without ſubmitting to political government, whoſe ſole

baſis is, not pure reaſon, but authority and precedent. Diſſolve theſe tyes, you break all the bonds of civil ſociety, and leave every man at liberty to conſult his particular intereſt, by thoſe expedients, which his appetite, diſguiſed under the appearance of reaſon, ſhall dictate to him. The ſpirit of innovation is in itſelf pernicious, however favourable its particular object may ſometimes appear: A truth ſo obvious, that the popular party themſelves are ſenſible of it, and therefore cover their encroachments on the crown by the plauſible pretence of their recovering the antient liberties of the people.

But the preſent prerogatives of the crown, allowing all the ſuppoſitions of that party, have been inconteſtibly eſtabliſhed ever ſince the acceſſion of the Houſe of TUDOR; a period, which, as it now comprehends an hundred and ſixty years, may be allowed ſufficient to give ſtability to any conſtitution. Would it not have appeared ridiculous, in the reign of the Emperor ADRIAN, to talk of the conſtitution of the republic as the rule of government; or to ſuppoſe that the former rights of the ſenate, and conſuls and tribunes were ſtill ſubſiſting?

But the preſent claims of the ENGLISH monarchs are infinitely more favourable than thoſe of the ROMAN emperors during that age. The authority of AUGUSTUS was a plain uſurpation, grounded only on military violence, and forms ſuch an æra in the ROMAN hiſtory, as is obvious to every reader. But if HENRY VII. really, as ſome pretend, enlarged the power of the crown, it was only by inſenſible acquiſitions, which eſcaped the apprehenſion of the people, and have ſcarcely been remarked even by hiſtorians and politicians. The new government, if it deſerves the name, is an imperceptible tranſition from the former; is entirely engrafted on it; derives its title fully from that root; and is to be conſidered only as one of thoſe gradual revolutions, to which human

human affairs, in every nation, will be for ever ſubject.

The Houſe of TUDOR, and after them that of STUART, exerciſed no prerogatives, but what had been claimed and exerciſed by the PLANTAGENETS. Not a ſingle branch of their authority can be ſaid to be altogether an innovation. The only difference is, that perhaps the former kings exerted theſe powers only by intervals, and were not able, by reaſon of the oppoſition of their barons, to render them ſo ſteady a rule of adminiſtration *. But the ſole inference from this fact is, that thoſe antient times were more turbulent and ſeditious; and that royal authority, the conſtitution, and the laws have happily of late gained the aſcendant.

Under what pretence can the popular party now talk of recovering the antient conſtitution? The former controul over the kings was not placed in the commons, but in the barons: The people had no authority, and even little or no liberty, till the crown, by ſuppreſſing theſe factious tyrants, enforced the execution of the laws, and obliged all the ſubjects equally to reſpect each others rights, privileges, and properties. If we muſt return to the antient barbarous and GOTHIC conſtitution; let thoſe gentlemen, who now behave themſelves with ſo much inſolence to their ſovereign, ſet the firſt example. Let them make court to be admitted as retainers to a neighbouring baron; and by ſubmitting to ſlavery under him, acquire ſome protection to themſelves; together with the power of exerciſing rapine and oppreſſion over their

* The author believes that he was the firſt writer who advanced that the family of TUDOR poſſeſſed in general more authority than their immediate predeceſſors: An opinion, which, he hopes, will be ſupported by hiſtory, but which he propoſes with ſome diffidence. There are ſtrong ſymptoms of arbitrary power in ſome former reigns, even after ſigning of the charters. The power of the crown in that age depended leſs on the conſtitution than on the capacity and vigour of the prince who wore it.

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inferior ſlaves and villains. This was the condition of the commons among their remote anceſtors.

But how far back ſhall we go, in having recourſe to antient conſtitutions and governments? There was a conſtitution ſtill more antient than that to which theſe innovators affect ſo much to appeal. During that period there was no *magna charta*: The barons themſelves poſſeſſed few regular, ſtated privileges: And the houſe of commons probably had not an exiſtence.

It is pleaſant to hear a houſe, while they are uſurping the whole power of government, talk of reviving antient inſtitutions. Is it not known, that, tho' the repreſentatives received wages from their conſtituents; to be a member of their houſe was always conſidered as a burthen, and a freedom from it as a privilege? Will they perſuade us, that power, which of all human acquiſitions is the moſt coveted, and in compariſon of which even reputation and pleaſure and riches are ſlighted, could ever be regarded as a burthen by any man?

The property acquired of late by the commons, it is ſaid, entitles them to more power than their anceſtors enjoyed. But to what is this encreaſe of their property owing, but to an encreaſe of their liberty and their ſecurity? Let them therefore acknowledge, that their anceſtors, while the crown was reſtrained by the ſeditious barons, really enjoyed leſs liberty than they themſelves have attained, after the ſovereign acquired the aſcendant; And let them enjoy that liberty with moderation; and not forfeit it by new exorbitant claims, and by rendering it a pretence for endleſs innovations.

The true rule of government is the preſent eſtabliſhed practice of the age. That has moſt authority, becauſe it is recent: It is alſo better known, for the ſame reaſon. Who has aſſured thoſe tribunes, that the PLANTAGE-

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NETS did not exerciſe as high acts of authority as the TUDORS? The hiſtorians, they ſay, do not mention them. But the hiſtorians are alſo ſilent with regard to the chief exertions of prerogative by the TUDORS. Where any power or prerogative is fully and undoubtedly eſtabliſhed, the exerciſe of it paſſes for a thing of courſe, and readily eſcapes the notice of hiſtory and annals. Had we no other monuments of ELIZABETH's reign, than what are preſerved even by CAMDEN, the moſt copious, judicious, and exact of our hiſtorians, we ſhould be entirely ignorant of the moſt important maxims of her government.

Was not the preſent monarchical government, to its full extent, authorized by lawyers, recommended by divines, acknowledged by politicians, acquieſced in, nay paſſionately cheriſhed, by the people in general; and all this during a period of at leaſt a hundred and ſixty years, and till of late, without the leaſt murmur or controverſy? This general conſent ſurely, during ſo long a time, muſt be ſufficient to render a conſtitution legal and valid. If the origin of all power be derived, as is pretended, from the people; here is their conſent in the fulleſt and moſt ample terms that can be deſired or imagined.

But the people muſt not pretend, becauſe they can, by their conſent, lay the foundations of government, that therefore they are to be permitted, at their pleaſure, to overthrow and ſubvert them. There is no end of theſe ſeditious and arrogant claims. The power of the crown is now openly ſtruck at: The nobility are alſo in viſible peril: The gentry will ſoon follow: The popular leaders, who will then aſſume the name of gentry, will next be expoſed to danger: And the people themſelves, having become incapable of civil government, and lying under the reſtraint of no authority, muſt, for the ſake of peace, admit, inſtead of their legal and mild monarchs, a ſucceſſion of military and deſpotic tyrants.

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These consequences are the more to be dreaded, as the present fury of the people, tho' glossed over by pretensions to civil liberty, is in reality incited by the fanaticism of religion; a principle the most blind, headstrong and ungovernable, by which human nature can ever possibly be actuated. Popular rage is dreadful from whatever motive derived: But must be attended with the most pernicious consequences, when it arises from a principle, which disclaims all control by human law, reason, or authority.

These are the arguments, which each party may make use of to justify the conduct of their predecessors, during that great crisis. The event has shown, that the reasonings of the popular party were better founded; but perhaps, according to the established maxims of lawyers and politicians, the views of the royalists ought, beforehand, to have appeared more solid, more safe, and more legal. But this is certain, that the greater moderation we now employ in representing past events; the nearer we shall be to produce a full coalition of the parties, and an entire acquiescence in our present happy establishment. Moderation is of advantage to every establishment: Nothing but zeal can overturn a settled power: And an overactive zeal in friends is apt to beget a like spirit in antagonists. The transition from a moderate opposition against an establishment, to an entire acquiescence in it, is easy and insensible.

There are many invincible arguments, which should induce the malecontent party to acquiesce entirely in the present settlement of the constitution. They now find, that the spirit of civil liberty, tho' at first connected with religious fanaticism, could purge itself from that pollution, and appear under a more genuine and engaging aspect; a friend to toleration, and an encourager of all the enlarged and generous sentiments that do honour to human

human nature. They may obſerve, that the popular claims could ſtop at a proper period; and after retrenching the exorbitant prerogatives of the crown, could ſtill maintain a due reſpect to monarchy, to nobility, and to all antient inſtitutions. Above all, they muſt be ſenſible, that the very principle, which made the ſtrength of their party, and from which it derived its chief authority, has now deſerted them, and gone over to their antagoniſts. The plan of liberty is ſettled; its happy effects are proved by experience; a long tract of time has given it ſtability; and whoever would attempt to overturn it, and to recall the paſt government or abdicated family, would, beſides other more criminal imputations, be expoſed in their turn to the reproach of faction and innovation. While they peruſe the hiſtory of paſt events, they ought to reflect, both that theſe rights of the crown are long ſince annihilated, and that the tyranny, and violence, and oppreſſion, to which they often gave riſe, are ills, from which the eſtabliſhed liberty of the conſtitution has now at laſt happily protected the people. Theſe reflections will prove a better ſecurity to our freedom and privileges, than to deny, contrary to the cleareſt evidence of facts, that ſuch regal powers ever had any exiſtence. There is not a more effectual method of betraying a cauſe, than to lay the ſtreſs of the argument on a wrong place, and by diſputing an untenable poſt, enure the adverſaries to ſucceſs and victory.

ESSAY

ESSAY XV.

Of the PROTESTANT SUCCESSION.

I SUPPOSE, that a member of parliament, in the reign of King WILLIAM or Queen ANNE, while the eſtabliſhment of the *Proteſtant Succeſſion* was yet uncertain, were deliberating concerning the party he would chuſe in that important queſtion, and weighing, with impartiality, the advantages and diſadvantages on each ſide. I believe the following particulars would have entered into his conſideration.

He would eaſily perceive the great advantages reſulting from the reſtoration of the STUART family; by which we ſhould preſerve the ſucceſſion clear and undiſputed, free from a pretender, with ſuch a ſpecious title as that of blood, which, with the multitude, is always the claim, the ſtrongeſt and moſt eaſily comprehended. 'Tis in vain to ſay, as many have done, that the queſtion with regard to *governors*, independent of *government*, is frivolous, and little worth diſputing, much leſs fighting about. The generality of mankind never will enter into theſe ſentiments; and 'tis much happier, I believe, for ſociety, that they do not, but rather continue in their natural prejudices and prepoſſeſſions. How could ſtability be preſerved in any monarchical government, (which, tho' perhaps, not the beſt, is, and always has been, the moſt common of any) unleſs men had ſo paſſionate a regard

gard for the true heir of their royal family; and even tho' he be weak in understanding, or infirm in years, gave him so great a preference above persons the most accomplished in shining talents, or celebrated for great atchievements? Would not every popular leader put in his claim at every vacancy, or even without any vacancy; and the kingdom become the theatre of perpetual wars and convulsions? The condition of the ROMAN empire, surely, was not, in this respect, much to be envied; nor is that of the *Eastern* nations, who pay little regard to the title of their sovereigns, but sacrifice them, every day, to the caprice or momentary humour of the populace or soldiery. 'Tis but a foolish wisdom, which is so carefully displayed, in undervaluing princes, and placing them on a level with the meanest of mankind. To be sure, an anatomist finds no more in the greatest monarch than in the lowest peasant or day-labourer; and a moralist may, perhaps, frequently find less. But what do all these reflections tend to? We, all of us, still retain these prejudices in favour of birth and family; and neither in our serious occupations, nor most careless amusements, can we ever get entirely rid of them. A tragedy, that should represent the adventures of sailors, or porters, or even of private gentlemen, would presently disgust us; but one that introduces kings and princes, acquires in our eyes an air of importance and dignity. Or should a man be able, by his superior wisdom, to get entirely above such prepossessions, he would soon, by means of the same wisdom, again bring himself down to them, for the sake of society, whose welfare he would perceive to be intimately connected with them. Far from endeavouring to undeceive the people in this particular, he would cherish such sentiments of reverence to their princes; as requisite to preserve a due subordination in society. And tho' the lives of twenty thousand men be often sacrificed to maintain a king in possession of his throne, or preserve the

right

right of ſucceſſion undiſturbed, he entertains no indignation at the loſs, on pretence that every individual of theſe was, perhaps, in himſelf, as valuable as the prince he ſerved. He conſiders the conſequences of violating the hereditary rights of kings: Conſequences, which may be felt for many centuries; while the loſs of ſeveral thouſand men brings ſo little prejudice to a large kingdom, that it may not be perceived a few years afterwards.

The advantages of the HANOVER ſucceſſion are of an oppoſite nature, and ariſe from this very circumſtance, that it violates hereditary right; and places on the throne a prince, to whom birth gave no title to that dignity. 'Tis evident to any one who conſiders the hiſtory of this iſland, that the privileges of the people have, during the two laſt centuries, been continually upon the increaſe, by the diviſion of the church-lands, by the alienations of the barons eſtates, by the progreſs of trade, and above all, by the happineſs of our ſituation, which, for a long time, gave us ſufficient ſecurity, without any ſtanding army or military eſtabliſhment. On the contrary, public liberty has, almoſt in every other nation of EUROPE, been, during the ſame period, extremely upon the decline; while the people were diſguſted at the hardſhips of the old feudal militia, and choſe rather to intruſt their prince with mercenary armies, which he eaſily turned againſt themſelves. It was nothing extraordinary, therefore, that ſome of our BRITISH ſovereigns miſtook the nature of the conſtitution, and genius of the people; and as they embraced all the favourable precedents left them by their anceſtors, they overlooked all thoſe which were contrary, and which ſuppoſed a limitation in our government. They were encouraged in this miſtake, by the example of all the neighbouring princes, who, bearing the ſame title or appellation, and being adorned with the ſame enſigns of authority, naturally led them to

claim the ſame powers and prerogatives *. The flattery of courtiers farther blinded them; and above all, that of the clergy, who from ſeveral paſſages of *ſcripture*, and theſe wreſted too, had erected a regular and avowed ſyſtem of tyranny and deſpotic power. The only method of

* It appears from the ſpeeches, and proclamations, and whole train of King JAMES I.'s actions, as well as his ſon's, that they conſidered the ENGLISH government as a ſimple monarchy, and never imagined that any conſiderable part of their ſubjects entertained a contrary idea. This made them diſcover their pretenſions, without preparing any force to ſupport them; and even without reſerve or diſguiſe, which are always employed by thoſe, who enter upon any new project, or endeavour to innovate in any government. King JAMES told his parliament plainly, when they meddled in ſtate affairs, *Ne ſutor ultra crepidam.* He uſed alſo, at his table, in promiſcuous companies, to advance his notions, in a manner ſtill more undiſguiſed: As we may learn from a ſtory told in the life of *Mr.* WALLER, and which that poet uſed frequently to repeat. When Mr. WALLER was young, he had the curioſity to go to court; and he ſtood in the circle, and ſaw King JAMES dine, where, amongſt other company, there ſat at table two biſhops. The King, openly and aloud, propoſed this queſtion, *Whether he might not take his ſubjects money, when he had occaſion for it, without all this formality of parliament?* The one biſhop readily replied, *God forbid you ſhould not: For you are the breath of our noſtrils.* The other biſhop declined anſwering, and ſaid he was not ſkilled in parliamentary caſes: But upon the King's urging him, and ſaying he would admit of no evaſion, his lordſhip replied very pleaſantly, *Why, then, I think your majeſty may lawfully take my brother's money: For he offers it.* In Sir WALTER RALEIGH's preface to the Hiſtory of the World, there is this remarkable paſſage. PHILIP II. *by ſtrong hand and main force, attempted to make himſelf not only an* abſolute monarch *over the* Netherlands, *like unto the kings and ſovereigns of* England *and* France; *but* Turk-like, *to tread under his feet all their natural and fundamental laws, privileges, and antient rights.* SPENSER, ſpeaking of ſome grants of the ENGLISH kings to the IRISH corporations, ſays, "All which, tho', "at the time of their firſt grant, they were tolerable, and perhaps reaſon"able, yet now are moſt unreaſonable and inconvenient. But all theſe "will eaſily be cut off with the ſuperior power of her majeſty's prerogative, "againſt which her own grants are not to be pleaded or inforced." *State of* IRELAND, p. 1537. Edit. 1706.

As theſe were very common, if not, perhaps, the univerſal notions of the times, the two firſt princes of the houſe of STUART were the more excuſable for their miſtake. And RAPIN, ſuitable to his uſual malignity and partiality, ſeems to treat them with too much ſeverity, upon account of it.

7 deſtroying,

deſtroying, at once, all theſe exorbitant claims and pretenſions, was to depart from the true hereditary line, and chooſe a prince, who, being plainly a creature of the public, and receiving the crown on conditions, expreſſed and avowed, found his authority eſtabliſhed on the ſame bottom with the privileges of the people. By electing him in the royal line, we cut off all hopes of ambitious ſubjects, who might, in future emergencies, diſturb the government by their cabals and pretenſions: By rendering the crown hereditary in his family, we avoided all the inconveniencies of elective monarchy: And by excluding the lineal heir, we ſecured all our conſtitutional limitations, and rendered our government uniform and of a piece. The people cheriſh monarchy, becauſe protected by it: The monarch favours liberty, becauſe created by it. And thus every advantage is obtained by the new eſtabliſhment, as far as human ſkill and wiſdom can extend itſelf.

Theſe are the ſeparate advantages of fixing the ſucceſſion, either in the houſe of STUART, or in that of HANOVER. There are alſo diſadvantages on each eſtabliſhment, which an impartial patriot would ponder and examine, in order to form a juſt judgment upon the whole.

The diſadvantages of the proteſtant ſucceſſion conſiſt in the foreign dominions, which are poſſeſſed by the princes of the HANOVER line, and which, it might be ſuppoſed, would engage us in the intrigues and wars of the continent, and loſe us, in ſome meaſure, the ineſtimable advantage we poſſeſs of being ſurrounded and guarded by the ſea, which we command. The diſadvantages of recalling the abdicated family conſiſt chiefly in their religion, which is more prejudicial to ſociety than that eſtabliſhed amongſt us, is contrary to it, and affords no toleration, or peace, or ſecurity to any other religion.

It appears to me, that all theſe advantages and diſadvantages are allowed on both ſides; at leaſt, by every one who is at all ſuſceptible of argument or reaſoning. No ſubject, however loyal, pretends to deny, that the diſputed title and foreign dominions of the preſent royal family are a loſs. Nor is there any partizan of the STUART family, but will confeſs, that the claim of hereditary, indefeaſible right, and the Roman Catholic religion, are alſo diſadvantages in that family. It belongs, therefore, to a philoſopher alone, who is of neither party, to put all theſe circumſtances in the ſcale, and aſſign to each of them its proper poiſe and influence. Such an one will readily, at firſt, acknowledge, that all political queſtions are infinitely complicated, and that there ſcarce ever occurs, in any deliberation, a choice, which is either purely good, or purely ill. Conſequences, mixed and varied, may be foreſeen to flow from every meaſure: And many conſequences, unforeſeen, do always, in fact, reſult from it. Heſitation, and reſerve, and ſuſpence, are therefore, the only ſentiments he brings to this eſſay or trial. Or if he indulges any paſſion, 'tis that of deriſion and ridicule againſt the ignorant multitude, who are always clamorous and dogmatical, even in the niceſt queſtions, of which, from want of temper, perhaps ſtill more than of underſtanding, they are altogether unfit judges.

But to ſay ſomething more determinate on this head, the following reflections will, I hope, ſhow the temper, if not the underſtanding of a philoſopher.

Were we to judge merely by firſt appearances, and by paſt experience, we muſt allow that the advantages of a parliamentary title of the houſe of HANOVER are much greater than thoſe of an undiſputed hereditary title in the houſe of STUART; and that our fathers acted wiſely in preferring the former to the latter. So long as the houſe of STUART reigned in BRITAIN, which with ſome in-

terruption, was above 80 years, the government was kept in a continual fever, by the contentions between the privileges of the people and the prerogatives of the crown. If arms were dropt, the noiſe of diſputes continued: Or if theſe were ſilenced, jealouſy ſtill corroded the heart, and threw the nation into an unnatural ferment and diſorder. And while we were thus occupied in domeſtic contentions, a foreign power, dangerous, if not fatal, to public liberty, erected itſelf in EUROPE, without any oppoſition from us, and even ſometimes with our aſſiſtance.

But during theſe laſt ſixty years, when a parliamentary eſtabliſhment has taken place; whatever factions may have prevailed either among the people or in public aſſemblies, the whole force of our conſtitution has always fallen to one ſide, and an uninterrupted harmony has been preſerved between our princes and our parliaments. Public liberty, with internal peace and order, has flouriſhed almoſt without interruption: Trade and manufactures, and agriculture, have increaſed: The arts, and ſciences, and philoſophy, have been cultivated. Even religious parties have been neceſſitated to lay aſide their mutual rancour: And the glory of the nation has ſpread itſelf all over EUROPE; while we ſtand the bulwark againſt oppreſſion, and the great antagoniſt of that power which threatens every people with conqueſt and ſubjection. So long and ſo glorious a period no nation almoſt can boaſt of: Nor is there another inſtance in the whole hiſtory of mankind, that ſo many millions of people have, during ſuch a ſpace of time, been held together, in a manner ſo free, ſo rational, and ſo ſuitable to the dignity of human nature.

But tho' this recent inſtance ſeems clearly to decide in favour of the preſent eſtabliſhment, there are ſome circumſtances to be thrown into the other ſcale; and 'tis dan-

gerous to regulate our judgment by one event or example.

We have had two rebellions during the flouriſhing period above mentioned, beſides plots and conſpiracies without number. And if none of theſe have produced any very fatal event, we may aſcribe our eſcape chiefly to the narrow genius of thoſe princes who diſputed our eſtabliſhment; and may eſteem ourſelves ſo far fortunate. But the claims of the baniſhed family, I fear, are not yet antiquated; and who can foretel, that their future attempts will produce no greater diſorder?

The diſputes between privilege and prerogative may eaſily be compoſed by laws, and votes, and conferences, and conceſſions; where there is tolerable temper or prudence on both ſides, or on either ſide. Among contending titles, the queſtion can only be determined by the ſword, and by deveſtation, and by civil war.

A prince who fills the throne with a diſputed title, dares not arm his ſubjects; the only method of ſecuring a people fully, both againſt domeſtic oppreſſion and foreign conqueſt.

Notwithſtanding all our riches and renown, what a critical eſcape did we lately make from dangers, which were owing not ſo much to bad conduct and ill ſucceſs in war, as to the pernicious practice of mortgaging our finances, and the ſtill more pernicious maxim of never paying off our incumbrances? Such fatal meaſures could never have been embraced, had it not been to ſecure a precarious eſtabliſhment *.

But to convince us, that an hereditary title is to be embraced rather than a parliamentary one, which is not

* Thoſe who conſider how univerſal this pernicious practice of funding has become all over EUROPE, may perhaps diſpute this laſt opinion. But we lay under leſs neceſſity than other ſtates.

ſupported

ſupported by any other views or motives; a man needs only tranſport himſelf back to the æra of the reſtoration, and ſuppoſe, that he had had a ſeat in that parliament which recalled the royal family, and put a period to the greateſt diſorders that ever aroſe from the oppoſite pretenſions of prince and people. What would have been thought of one, that had propoſed, at that time, to ſet aſide CHARLES II. and ſettle the crown on the Duke of YORK or GLOCESTER, merely in order to exclude all high claims, like thoſe of their father and grandfather? Would not ſuch an one have been regarded as a very extravagant projector, who loved dangerous remedies, and could tamper and play with a government and national conſtitution, like a quack with a ſickly patient?

The advantages which reſult from a parliamentary title, preferably to an hereditary one, tho' they are great, are too refined ever to enter into the conception of the vulgar. The bulk of mankind would never allow them to be ſufficient for committing what would be regarded as an injuſtice to the prince. They muſt be ſupported by ſome groſs, popular, and familiar topics; and wiſe men, though convinced of their force, would reject them, in compliance with the weakneſs and prejudices of the people. An incroaching tyrant or deluded bigot alone, by his miſconduct, is able to enrage the nation, and render practicable what was always perhaps deſireable.

In reality, the reaſon aſſigned by the nation for excluding the race of STUART, and ſo many other branches of the royal family, is not on account of their hereditary title (which, however juſt in itſelf, would to vulgar apprehenſions, have appeared altogether abſurd) but on account of their religion. Which leads us to compare the diſadvantages above mentioned of each eſtabliſhment.

I confeſs, that, conſidering the matter in general, it were much to be wiſhed, that our prince had no foreign

dominions, and could confine all his attention to the government of this iſland. For not to mention ſome real inconveniencies that may reſult from territories on the continent, they afford ſuch a handle for calumny and defamation, as is greedily ſeized by the people, who are always diſpoſed to think ill of their ſuperiors. It muſt, however, be acknowledged, that HANOVER is, perhaps, the ſpot of ground in EUROPE the leaſt inconvenient for a King of BRITAIN. It lies in the heart of GERMANY, at a diſtance from the great powers, which are our natural rivals: It is protected by the laws of the empire, as well as by the arms of its own ſovereign, and it ſerves only to connect us more cloſely with the houſe of AUSTRIA, which is our natural ally.

In the laſt war, it has been of ſervice to us, by furniſhing us with a conſiderable body of auxiliary troops, the braveſt and moſt faithful in the world. The Elector of HANOVER is the only conſiderable prince in the empire, who has purſued no ſeparate end, and has raiſed up no ſtale pretenſions, during the late commotions of EUROPE; but has acted, all along, with the dignity of a King of BRITAIN. And ever ſince the acceſſion of that family, it would be difficult to ſhow any harm we have ever received from the electoral dominions, except that ſhort diſguſt in 1718, with CHARLES XII. who, regulating himſelf by maxims very different from thoſe of other princes, made a perſonal quarrel of every public injury *.

The religious perſuaſion of thoſe of STUART is an inconvenience of a much deeper dye, and would threaten us with much more diſmal conſequences. The Roman Catholic religion, with its huge train of prieſts and friers, is vaſtly more expenſive than ours: Even tho' unaccompanied with its natural attendants of inquiſitors, and

* This was publiſhed in the year 1752.

ſtakes,

ſtakes, and gibbets, it is leſs tolerating: And not contented with dividing the ſacerdotal from the regal office (which muſt be prejudicial to any ſtate) it beſtows the former on a foreigner, who has always a ſeparate, and may often have an oppoſite intereſt to that of the public.

But were this religion ever ſo advantageous to ſociety, it is contrary to that which is eſtabliſhed among us, and which is likely to keep poſſeſſion for a long time, of the minds of the people. And tho' it is much to be hoped, that the progreſs of reaſon and philoſophy will, by degrees, abate the virulent acrimony of oppoſite religions all over EUROPE; yet the ſpirit of moderation has, as yet, made too ſlow advances to be entirely truſted. The conduct of the SAXON family, where the ſame perſon can be a Catholic King and Proteſtant Elector, is, perhaps, the firſt inſtance, in modern times, of ſo reaſonable and prudent a behaviour. And the gradual progreſs of the Catholic ſuperſtition does, even there, prognoſticate a ſpeedy alteration: After which, 'tis juſtly to be apprehended, that perſecutions will put a ſpeedy period to the Proteſtant religion in the place of its nativity.

Thus, upon the whole, the advantages of the ſettlement in the family of STUART, which frees us from a diſputed title, ſeem to bear ſome proportion with thoſe of the ſettlement in the family of HANOVER, which frees us from the claims of prerogative: But at the ſame time, its diſadvantages, by placing on the throne a Roman Catholic, are much greater than thoſe of the other eſtabliſhment, in ſettling the crown on a foreign prince. What party an impartial patriot, in the reign of K. WILLIAM or Q. ANNE, would have choſen amidſt theſe oppoſite views, may, perhaps, to ſome appear hard to determine. For my part, I eſteem liberty ſo invaluable a bleſſing in ſociety, that whatever favours its progreſs and ſecurity, can ſcarce be too fondly cheriſhed by every one who is a lover of human kind.

But

But the ſettlement in the houſe of HANOVER has actually taken place. The princes of that family, without intrigue, without cabal, without ſolicitation on their part, have been called to mount our throne, by the united voice of the whole legiſlative body. They have, ſince their acceſſion, diſplayed in all their actions, the utmoſt mildneſs, equity, and regard to the laws and conſtitution. Our own miniſters, our own parliaments, ourſelves have governed us; and if aught ill has befallen us, we can only blame fortune or ourſelves. What a reproach muſt we become among nations, if, diſguſted with a ſettlement ſo deliberately made, and whoſe conditions have been ſo religiouſly obſerved, we ſhould throw every thing again into confuſion; and by our levity and rebellious diſpoſition, prove ourſelves totally unfit for any ſtate but that of abſolute ſlavery and ſubjection?

The greateſt inconvenience attending a diſputed title, is, that it brings us in danger of civil wars and rebellions. What wiſe man, to avoid this inconvenience, would run directly upon a civil war and rebellion? Not to mention, that ſo long poſſeſſion, ſecured by ſo many laws, muſt, ere this time, in the apprehenſion of a great part of the nation, have begot a title in the houſe of HANOVER, independent of their preſent poſſeſſion: So that now we ſhould not, even by a revolution, obtain the end of avoiding a diſputed title.

No revolution made by national forces, will ever be able, without ſome other great neceſſity, to aboliſh our debts and incumbrances, in which the intereſt of ſo many perſons is concerned. And a revolution made by foreign forces, is a conqueſt: A calamity with which the precarious balance of power threatens us, and which our civil diſſenſions are likely, above all other circumſtances, to bring upon us.

ESSAY

ESSAY XVI.

IDEA of a PERFECT COMMONWEALTH.

OF all mankind there are none ſo pernicious as political projectors, if they have power; nor ſo ridiculous, if they want it: As on the other hand, a wiſe politician is the moſt beneficial character in nature, if accompanied with authority; and the moſt innocent, and not altogether uſeleſs, even if deprived of it. 'Tis not with forms of government, as with other artificial contrivances; where an old engine may be rejected, if we can diſcover another more accurate and commodious, or where trials may ſafely be made, even tho' the ſucceſs be doubtful. An eſtabliſhed government has an infinite advantage, by that very circumſtance of its being eſtabliſhed; the bulk of mankind being governed by authority, not reaſon, and never attributing authority to any thing that has not the recommendation of antiquity. To tamper, therefore, in this affair, or try projects merely upon the credit of ſuppoſed argument and philoſophy, can never be the part of a wiſe magiſtrate, who will bear a reverence to what carries the marks of age; and tho' he may attempt ſome improvements for the public good, yet will he adjuſt his innovations, as much as poſſible, to the antient fabric, and preſerve intire the chief pillars and ſupports of the conſtitution.

The mathematicians in EUROPE have been much divided concerning that figure of a ſhip, which is the moſt commodious for ſailing; and HUYGENS, who at laſt determined

termined this controverſy, is juſtly thought to have obliged the learned, as well as commercial world; tho' COLUMBUS had ſailed to AMERICA, and Sir FRANCIS DRAKE made the tour of the world, without any ſuch diſcovery. As one form of government muſt be allowed more perfect than another, independent of the manners and humours of particular men; why may we not inquire what is the moſt perfect of all, tho' the common botched and inaccurate governments ſeem to ſerve the purpoſes of ſociety, and tho' it be not ſo eaſy to eſtabliſh a new government, as to build a veſſel upon a new plan? The ſubject is ſurely the moſt worthy curioſity of any the wit of man can poſſibly deviſe. And who knows, if this controverſy were fixed by the univerſal conſent of the learned, but, in ſome future age, an opportunity might be afforded of reducing the theory to practice, either by a diſſolution of the old governments, or the combination of men to form a new one, in ſome diſtant part of the world? In all caſes, it muſt be advantageous to know what is moſt perfect in the kind, that we may be able to bring any real conſtitution or form of government as near it as poſſible, by ſuch gentle alterations and innovations as may not give too great diſturbance to ſociety.

All I pretend to in the preſent eſſay is to revive this ſubject of ſpeculation; and therefore I ſhall deliver my ſentiments in as few words as poſſible. A long diſſertation on that head would not, I apprehend, be very acceptable to the public, who will be apt to regard ſuch diſquiſitions both as uſeleſs and chimerical.

All plans of government, which ſuppoſe great reformation in the manners of mankind, are plainly imaginary. Of this nature, are the *Republic* of PLATO, and the *Utopia* of Sir THOMAS MORE. The OCEANA is the only valuable model of a commonwealth, that has as yet been offered to the public.

The

The chief defects of the OCEANA ſeem to be theſe. *Firſt*, Its rotation is inconvenient, by throwing men, of whatever ability, by intervals, out of public employments. *Secondly*, Its *Agrarian* is impracticable. Men will ſoon learn the art, which was practiſed in antient ROME, of concealing their poſſeſſions under other people's names; till at laſt, the abuſe will become ſo common, that they will throw off even the appearance of reſtraint. *Thirdly*, The OCEANA provides not a ſufficient ſecurity for liberty, or the redreſs of grievances. The ſenate muſt propoſe, and the people conſent; by which means, the ſenate have not only a negative upon the people, but, what is of infinitely greater conſequence, their negative goes before the votes of the people. Were the King's negative of the ſame nature in the ENGLISH conſtitution, and could he prevent any bill from coming into parliament, he would be an abſolute monarch. As his negative follows the votes of the houſes, it is of little conſequence: Such a difference is there in the manner of placing the ſame thing. When a popular bill has been debated in the two houſes, is brought to maturity, all its conveniencies and inconveniencies weighed and balanced; if afterwards it be preſented for the royal aſſent, few princes will venture to reject the unanimous deſire of the people. But could the King cruſh a diſagreeable bill in embryo (as was the caſe, for ſome time, in the SCOTS parliament, by means of the lords of the articles) the BRITISH government would have no balance, nor would grievances ever be redreſſed: And 'tis certain, that exorbitant power proceeds not, in any government, from new laws, ſo much as from neglecting to remedy the abuſes which frequently riſe from the old ones. A government, ſays MACHIAVEL, muſt often be brought back to its original principles. It appears then, that in the OCEANA the whole legiſlature may be ſaid to reſt in the ſenate; which HARRINGTON would own to be an incon-

inconvenient form of government, eſpecially after the *Agrarian* is aboliſhed.

Here is a form of government, to which I cannot, in theory, diſcover any conſiderable objection.

Let GREAT BRITAIN and IRELAND, or any territory of equal extent, be divided into 100 counties, and each county into 100 pariſhes, making in all 10,000. If the country purpoſed to be erected into a commonwealth, be of more narrow extent, we may diminiſh the number of counties; but never bring them below thirty. If it be of greater extent, it were better to enlarge the pariſhes, or throw more pariſhes into a county, than increaſe the number of counties.

Let all the freeholders of ten pounds a-year in the country, and all the houſe-holders worth 200 pounds in the town-pariſhes, meet annually in the pariſh church, and chuſe, by ballot, ſome freeholder of the county for their member, whom we ſhall call the county *repreſentative*.

Let the 100 county repreſentatives, two days after their election, meet in the county-town, and chuſe by ballot, from their own body, ten county *magiſtrates*, and one *ſenator*. There are, therefore, in the whole commonwealth, 100 ſenators, 1100 county magiſtrates, and 10,000 county repreſentatives. For we ſhall beſtow on all ſenators the authority of county magiſtrates, and on all county magiſtrates the authority of county repreſentatives.

Let the ſenators meet in the capital, and be endowed with the whole executive power of the commonwealth; the power of peace and war, of giving orders to generals, admirals, and ambaſſadors, and, in ſhort, all the prerogatives of a BRITISH King, except his negative.

Let the county repreſentatives meet in their particular counties, and poſſeſs the whole legiſlative power of the commonwealth; the greateſt number of counties deciding

ing the queſtion; and where theſe are equal, let the ſenate have the caſting vote.

Every new law muſt firſt be debated in the ſenate; and tho' rejected by it, if ten ſenators inſiſt and proteſt, it muſt be ſent down to the counties. The ſenate may join to the copy of the law, their reaſons for receiving or rejecting it.

Becauſe it would be troubleſome to aſſemble all the county repreſentatives for every trivial law, that may be requiſite, the ſenate have their choice of ſending down the law either to the county magiſtrates or county repreſentatives.

The magiſtrates, tho' the law be referred to them, may, if they pleaſe, call the repreſentatives, and ſubmit the affair to their determination.

Whether the law be referred by the ſenate to the county magiſtrates or repreſentatives, a copy of it, and of the ſenate's reaſons, muſt be ſent to every repreſentative eight days before the day appointed for the aſſembling, in order to deliberate concerning it. And tho' the determination be, by the ſenate, referred to the magiſtrates, if five repreſentatives of the county order the magiſtrates to aſſemble the whole court of repreſentatives, and ſubmit the affair to their determination, they muſt obey.

Either the county magiſtrates or repreſentatives may give, to the ſenator of the county, the copy of a law to be propoſed to the ſenate; and if five counties concur in the ſame order, the law, tho' refuſed by the ſenate, muſt come either to the county magiſtrates or repreſentatives, as is contained in the order of the five counties.

Any twenty counties, by a vote either of their magiſtrates or repreſentatives, may throw any man out of all public offices for a year. Thirty counties for three years.

The ſenate has a power of throwing out any member or number of members of its own body, not to be re-

elected

elected for that year. The ſenate cannot throw out twice in a year the ſenator of the ſame county.

The power of the old ſenate continues for three weeks after the annual election of the county repreſentatives. Then all the new ſenators are ſhut up in a conclave, like the cardinals; and by an intricate ballot, ſuch as that of VENICE or MALTA, they chuſe the following magiſtrates; a protector, who repreſents the dignity of the commonwealth, and preſides in the ſenate; two ſecretaries of ſtate; theſe ſix councils, a council of ſtate, a council of religion and learning, a council of trade, a council of laws, a council of war, a council of the admiralty, each council conſiſting of five perſons; together with ſix commiſſioners of the treaſury and a firſt commiſſioner. All theſe muſt be ſenators. The ſenate alſo names all the ambaſſadors to foreign courts, who may either be ſenators or not.

The ſenate may continue any or all of theſe, but muſt re-elect them every year.

The protector and two ſecretaries have ſeſſion and ſuffrage in the council of ſtate. The buſineſs of that council is all foreign politics. The council of ſtate has ſeſſion and ſuffrage in all the other councils.

The council of religion and learning inſpects the univerſities and clergy. That of trade inſpects every thing that may affect commerce. That of laws inſpects all the abuſes of laws by the inferior magiſtrates, and examines what improvements may be made of the municipal law. That of war inſpects the militia and its diſcipline, magazines, ſtores, &c. and when the republic is in war, examines into the proper orders for generals. The council of admiralty has the ſame power with regard to the navy, together with the nomination of the captains and all inferior officers.

None

None of these councils can give orders themselves, except where they receive such powers from the senate. In other cases, they must communicate every thing to the senate.

When the senate is under adjournment, any of the councils may assemble it before the day appointed for its meeting.

Besides these councils or courts, there is another called the court of *competitors*; which is thus constituted. If any candidates for the office of senator have more votes than a third of the representatives, that candidate, who has most votes, next to the senator elected, becomes incapable for one year of all public offices, even of being a magistrate or representative: But he takes his seat in the court of competitors. Here then is a court which may sometimes consist of a hundred members, sometimes have no members at all; and by that means, be for a year abolished.

The court of competitors has no power in the commonwealth. It has only the inspection of public accounts, and the accusing any man before the senate. If the senate acquit him, the court of competitors may, if they please, appeal to the people, either magistrates or representatives. Upon that appeal, the magistrates or representatives meet on the day appointed by the court of competitors, and chuse in each county three persons; from which number every senator is excluded. These to the number of 300 meet in the capital, and bring the person accused to a new trial.

The court of competitors may propose any law to the senate; and if refused, may appeal to the people; that is, to the magistrates or representatives, who examine it in their counties. Every senator, who is thrown out of the senate by a vote of the court, takes his seat in the court of competitors.

The ſenate poſſeſſes all the judicative authority of the houſe of Lords, that is, all the appeals from the inferior courts. It likewiſe nominates the Lord Chancellor, and all the officers of the law.

Every county is a kind of republic within itſelf, and the repreſentatives may make county-laws; which have no authority 'till three months after they are voted. A copy of the law is ſent to the ſenate, and to every other county. The ſenate, or any ſingle county, may, at any time, annul any law of another county.

The repreſentatives have all the authority of the BRITISH juſtices of peace in trials, commitments, &c.

The magiſtrates have the nomination of all the officers of the revenue in each county. All cauſes with regard to the revenue are appealed ultimately to the magiſtrates. They paſs the accompts of all the officers; but muſt have all their own accompts examined and paſſed at the end of the year by the repreſentatives.

The magiſtrates name rectors or miniſters to all the pariſhes.

The Preſbyterian government is eſtabliſhed; and the higheſt eccleſiaſtical court is an aſſembly or ſynod of all the preſbyters of the county. The magiſtrates may take any cauſe from this court, and determine it themſelves.

The magiſtrates may try, and depoſe or ſuſpend any preſbyter.

The militia is eſtabliſhed in imitation of that of SWISSERLAND, which being well known, we ſhall not inſiſt upon it. It will only be proper to make this obſervation, that an army of 20,000 men be annually drawn out by rotation, paid and encamped during ſix weeks in ſummer; that the duty of a camp may not be altogether unknown.

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The magistrates nominate all the colonels and downwards. The senate all upwards. During war, the general nominates the colonel and downwards, and his commission is good for a twelvemonth. But after that, it must be confirmed by the magistrates of the county, to which the regiment belongs. The magistrates may break any officer in the county regiment. And the senate may do the same to any officer in the service. If the magistrates do not think proper to confirm the general's choice, they may nominate another officer in the place of him they reject.

All crimes are tried within the county by the magistrates and a jury. But the senate can stop any trial, and bring it before themselves.

Any county may indict any man before the senate, for any crime.

The protector, the two secretaries, the council of state, with any five more that the senate appoints, on extraordinary emergencies, are possessed of *dictatorial* power for six months.

The protector may pardon any person condemned by the inferior courts.

In time of war, no officer of the army that is in the field, can have any civil office in the commonwealth.

The capital, which we shall call LONDON, may be allowed four members in the senate. It may therefore be divided into four counties. The representatives of each of these chuse one senator, and ten magistrates. There are therefore in the city four senators, forty-four magistrates, and four hundred representatives. The magistrates have the same authority as in the counties. The representatives also have the same authority, but they never meet in one general court: They give their votes in their particular county, or division of hundreds.

When they enact any city-law, the greatest number of counties or divisions determines the matter. And where these are equal, the magistrates have the casting vote.

The magistrates chuse the mayor, sheriff, recorder, and other officers of the city.

In the commonwealth, no representative, magistrate, or senator, as such, has any salary. The protector, secretaries, councils, and ambassadors, have salaries.

The first year in every century is set apart to correct all inequalities, which time may have produced in the representative. This must be done by the legislature.

The following political aphorisms may explain the reason of these orders.

The lower sort of people and small proprietors are good enough judges of one not very distant from them in rank or habitation; and therefore, in their parochial meetings, will probably chuse the best, or nearly the best representative: But they are wholly unfit for county-meetings, and for electing into the higher offices of the republic. Their ignorance gives the grandees an opportunity of deceiving them.

Ten thousand, even tho' they were not annually elected, are a large enough basis for any free government. 'Tis true, the nobles in POLAND are more than 10,000, and yet these oppress the people. But as power continues there always in the same persons and families, this makes them, in a manner, a different nation from the people. Besides, the nobles are there united under a few heads of families.

All free governments must consist of two councils, a less and a greater, or, in other words, of a senate and people. The people, as HARRINGTON observes, would

want wisdom, without the senate: The senate, without the people, would want honesty.

A large assembly of 1000, for instance, to represent the people, if allowed to debate, would fall into disorder. If not allowed to debate, the senate has a negative upon them, and the worst kind of negative, that before resolution.

Here therefore is an inconvenience, which no government has yet fully remedied, but which is the easiest to be remedied in the world. If the people debate, all is confusion: If they do not debate, they can only resolve; and then the senate carves for them. Divide the people into many separate bodies; and then they may debate with safety, and every inconvenience seems to be prevented.

Cardinal de RETZ says, that all numerous assemblies, however composed, are mere mob, and swayed in their debates by the least motive. This we find confirmed by daily experience. When an absurdity strikes a member, he conveys it to his neighbour, and so on, till the whole be infected. Separate this great body; and tho' every member be only of middling sense, 'tis not probable, that any thing but reason can prevail over the whole. Influence and example being removed, good sense will always get the better of bad among a number of people. Good sense is one thing: But follies are numberless; and every man has a different one. The only way of making a people wise, is to keep them from uniting into large assemblies.

There are two things to be guarded against in every *senate:* Its combination, and its division. Its combination is most dangerous. And against this inconvenience we have provided the following remedies. 1. The great dependence of the senators on the people by annual elec-

tion; and that not by an undistinguishing rabble, like the ENGLISH electors, but by men of fortune and education. 2. The small power they are allowed. They have few offices to dispose of. Almost all are given by the magistrates in the counties. 3. The court of competitors, which being composed of men that are their rivals, more to them in interest, and uneasy in their present situations, will be sure to take all advantages against them.

The division of the senate is prevented, 1. By the smallness of their number. 2. As faction supposes a combination to a separate interest, it is prevented by their dependence on the people. 3. They have a power of expelling any factious member. 'Tis true, when another member of the same spirit comes from the county, they have no power of expelling him: Nor is it fit they should; for that shows the humour to be in the people, and probably arises from some ill conduct in public affairs. 4. Almost any man, in a senate so regularly chosen by the people, may be supposed fit for any civil office. It would be proper, therefore, for the senate to form some *general* resolutions with regard to the disposing of offices among the members: Which resolutions would not confine them in critical times, when extraordinary parts on the one hand, or extraordinary stupidity on the other, appears in any senator; but yet they would be sufficient to prevent brigue and faction, by making the dispoal of the offices a thing of course. For instance, let it be a resolution, That no man shall enjoy any office, till he has sat four years in the senate: That, except ambassadors, no man shall be in office two years following: That no man shall attain the higher offices but into the lower: That no man shall be protector twice, &c. The senate of VENICE govern themselves by such resolutions.

In foreign politics the interest of the senate can scarce ever be divided from that of the people; and therefore

'tis fit to make the senate absolute with regard to them; otherwise there could be no secrecy nor refined policy. Besides, without money no alliance can be executed; and the senate is still sufficiently dependant. Not to mention, that the legislative power being always superior to the executive, the magistrates or representatives may interpose whenever they think proper.

The chief support of the BRITISH government is the opposition of interests; but that, tho' in the main serviceable, breeds endless factions. In the foregoing plan, it does all the good without any of the harm. The *competitors* have no power of controlling the senate: they have only the power of accusing, and appealing to the people.

'Tis necessary, likewise, to prevent both combination and division in the thousand magistrates. This is done sufficiently by the separation of places and interests.

But left that should not be enough, their dependence on the 10,000 for their elections, serves to the same purpose.

Nor is that all: For the 10,000 may resume the power whenever they please; and not only when they all please, but when any five of a hundred please, which will happen upon the very first suspicion of a separate interest.

The 10,000 are too large a body either to unite or divide, except when they meet in one place, and fall under the guidance of ambitious leaders. Not to mention their annual election, by the whole body of the people, that are of any consideration.

A small commonwealth is the happiest government in the world within itself, because every thing lies under the eye of the rulers: But it may be subdued by great forces from without. This scheme seems to have all the advantages both of a great and a little commonwealth.

Every county-law may be annulled either by the senate or another county; because that shows an opposition of interest:

interest: In which case no part ought to decide for itself. The matter must be referred to the whole, which will both determine what agrees with general interest

As to the clergy and militia, the reasons of these orders are obvious. Without the dependance of the clergy on the civil magistrates, and without a militia, 'tis folly to think any free government will ever have security or stability.

In many governments, the inferior magistrates have no rewards but what arise from their ambition, vanity, or public spirit. The salaries of the FRENCH judges amount not to the interest of the sums they pay for their offices. The DUTCH burgo-masters have little more immediate profit than the ENGLISH justices of peace, or the members of the house of commons formerly. But lest any should suspect, that this would beget negligence in the administration, (which is little to be feared, considering the natural ambition of mankind) let the magistrates have competent salaries. The senators have access to so many honourable and lucrative offices, that their attendance needs not be bought. There is little attendance required of the representatives.

That the foregoing plan of government is practicable, no one can doubt, who considers the resemblance it bears to the commonwealth of the United Provinces, formerly one of the wisest and most renowned governments that ever was in the world. The alterations in the present scheme are all evidently to the better. 1. The representation is more equal. 2. The unlimited power of the burgo-masters in the towns, which forms a perfect aristocracy in the DUTCH commonwealth, is corrected by a well-tempered democracy, in giving to the people the annual election of the county representatives. 3. The negative, which every province and town has upon the whole body of the DUTCH republic, with regard to alliances, peace and war, and the imposition of taxes, is

here

here removed. 4. The counties, in the present plan, are not so independent of each other, nor do they form separate bodies so much as the seven provinces; where the jealousy and envy of the smaller provinces and towns against the greater, particularly HOLLAND and AMSTERDAM, have frequently disturbed the government. 5. Larger powers, tho' of the safest kind, are intrusted to the senate than the States-General possess; by which means, the former may become more expeditious, and secret in their resolutions, than 'tis possible for the latter.

The chief alterations that could be made on the BRITISH government, in order to bring it to the most perfect model of limited monarchy, seem to be the following. *First*, The plan of the republican parliament ought to be restored, by making the representation equal, and by allowing none to vote in the county elections who possess not a property of 200 pounds value. *Secondly*, As such a house of Commons would be too weighty for a frail house of Lords, like the present, the Bishops and SCOTS Peers ought to be removed, whose behaviour, *in former parliaments*, destroyed entirely the authority of that house: The number of the upper house ought to be raised to three or four hundred: Their seats not hereditary, but during life; They ought to have the election of their own members; and no commoner should be allowed to refuse a seat that was offered him. By this means, the house of Lords would consist entirely of the men of chief credit, ability, and interest of the nation; and every turbulent leader in the house of Commons might be taken off, and connected in interest with the house of Peers. Such an aristocracy would be an excellent barrier both to the monarchy and against it. At present, the balance of our government depends in some measure on the ability and behaviour of the sovereign; which are variable and uncertain circumstances.

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I allow, that this plan of limited monarchy, however corrected, is ſtill liable to three great inconveniencies. *Firſt*, It removes not entirely, tho' it may ſoften, the parties of *court* and *country*. *Secondly*, The King's perſonal character muſt ſtill have a great influence on the government. *Thirdly*, The ſword is in the hands of a ſingle perſon, who will always neglect to diſcipline the militia, in order to have a pretence for keeping up a ſtanding army. 'Tis evident, that this is a mortal diſtemper in the BRITISH government, of which it muſt at laſt inevitably periſh. I muſt, however, confeſs, that SWEDEN ſeems, in ſome meaſure, to have remedied this inconvenience, and to have a militia, with its limited monarchy, as well as a ſtanding army, which is leſs dangerous than the BRITISH.

We ſhall conclude this ſubject, with obſerving the falſehood of the common opinion, that no large ſtate, ſuch as FRANCE or BRITAIN, could ever be modelled into a commonwealth, but that ſuch a form of government can only take place in a city or ſmall territory. The contrary ſeems evident. Tho' 'tis more difficult to form a republican government in an extenſive country than in a city; there is more facility, when once it is formed, of preſerving it ſteady and uniform, without tumult and faction. 'Tis not eaſy, for the diſtant parts of a large ſtate to combine in any plan of free government; but they eaſily conſpire in the eſteem and reverence for a ſingle perſon, who, by means of this popular favour, may ſeize the power, and forcing the more obſtinate to ſubmit, may eſtabliſh a monarchical government. On the other hand, a city readily concurs in the ſame notions of government, the natural equality of property favours liberty, and the nearneſs of habitation enables the citizens mutually to aſſiſt each other. Even under abſolute princes, the ſubordinate government of cities is commonly republi-

republican; while that of counties and provinces is monarchical. But these same circumstances, which facilitate the erection of commonwealths in cities, render their constitution more frail and uncertain. Democracies are turbulent. For however the people may be separated or divided into small parties, either in their votes or elections; their near habitation in a city will always make the force of popular tides and currents very sensible. Aristocracies are better adapted for peace and order, and accordingly were most admired by antient writers; but they are jealous and oppressive. In a large government, which is modelled with masterly skill, there is compass and room enough to refine the democracy, from the lower people, who may be admitted into the first elections or first concoction of the commonwealth, to the higher magistrates, who direct all the movements. At the same time, the parts are so distant and remote, that 'tis very difficult, either by intrigue, prejudice, or passion, to hurry them into any measures against the public interest.

'Tis needless to inquire, whether such a government would be immortal. I allow the justness of the poet's exclamation on the endless projects of human race, *Man and for ever!* The world itself probably is not immortal. Such consuming plagues may arise as would leave even a perfect government a weak prey to its neighbours. We know not to what lengths enthusiasm, or other extraordinary motions of the human mind, may transport men, to the neglect of all order and public good. Where difference of interest is removed, whimsical and unaccountable factions often arise, from personal favour or enmity. Perhaps rust may grow to the springs of the most accurate political machine, and disorder its motions. Lastly, extensive conquests, when pursued, must be the ruin of every free government; and of the more perfect governments sooner than

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of the imperfect; because of the very advantages which the former poſſeſs above the latter. And tho' ſuch a ſtate ought to eſtabliſh a fundamental law againſt conqueſts; yet republics have ambition as well as individuals, and preſent intereſt makes men forgetful of their poſterity. 'Tis a ſufficient incitement to human endeavours, that ſuch a government would flouriſh for many ages; without pretending to beſtow on any work of man, that immortality, which the Almighty ſeems to have refuſed to his own productions.

END of the FIRST VOLUME.